

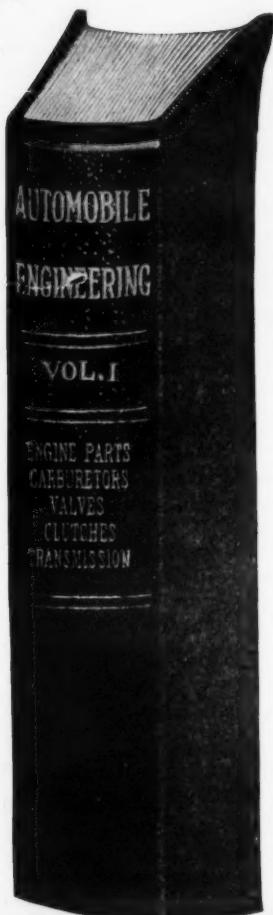
SMITH'S

T. 1919
CENTS

MAGAZINE



Painted by
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Vol. XXX

No. 1



SMITH'S MAGAZINE



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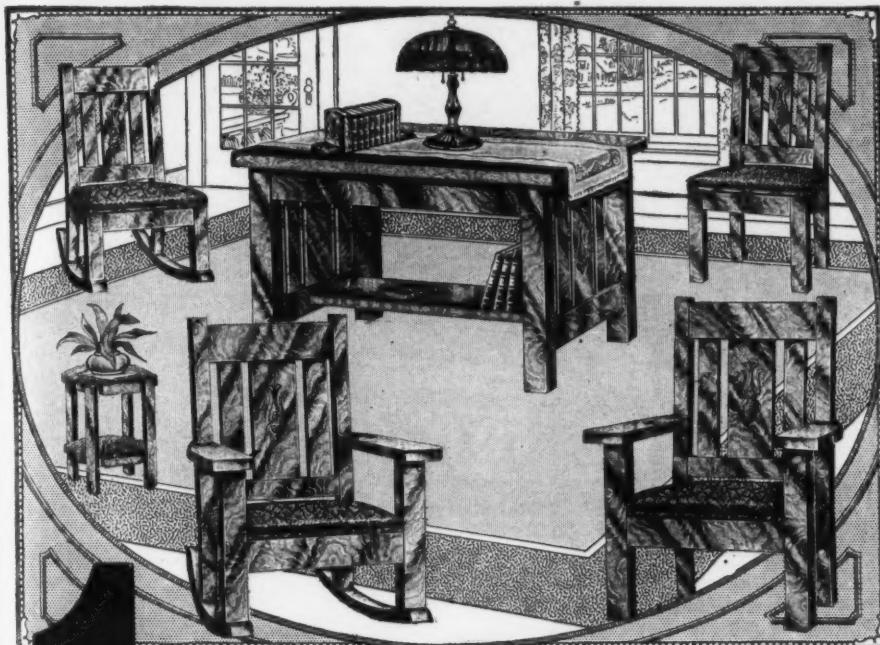
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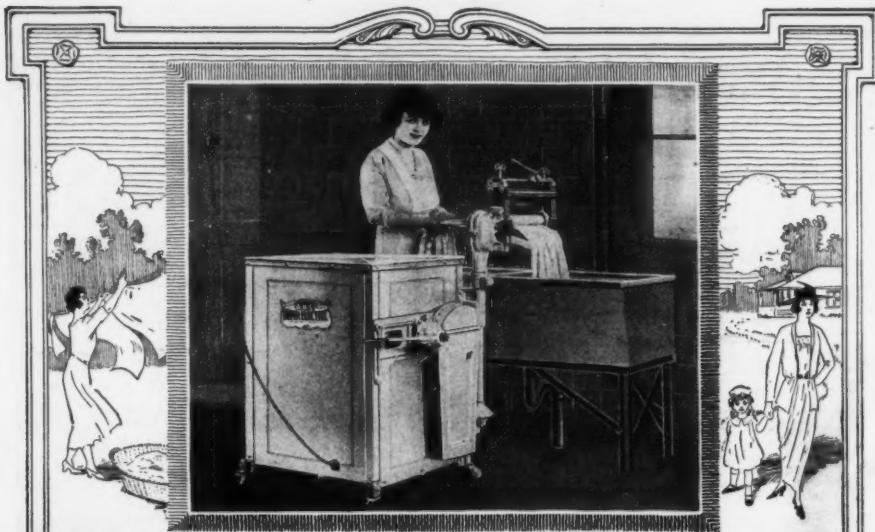
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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 30

OCTOBER, 1919

Number 1

His Sister-in-Law's Stepdaughter

By Elizabeth Dejeans

Author of "The Tiger's Coat," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

This is the first story that this wonderfully gifted author has written for SMITH'S. A new star in an all-star cast.

JOHN BRAMTON-DEFOREST had crossed the continent to see his sister-in-law. He had come in on the early afternoon train and had taken rooms in the same hotel in which she was staying. He had come unannounced, for he felt that it would be pleasant to see Irmatitude's eyes fill with surprise—and joy. It had been five long years of waiting, and latterly with a tacit understanding.

That five years of quietly holding to a purpose and to the conventions, and doing his duty by the entire Bramton-Deforest family meanwhile, was characteristic of John. Apparently, he was very like his father, the millionaire banker; he looked like his father, and, his financial ability being the most apparent thing about him, John's other qualities escaped notice. Even his family had not fathomed John, though they loaded him with their financial affairs and domestic difficulties. Most of John's acts and his thoughts he kept strictly to himself.

There had been five Bramton-Deforests: the Misses Bramton-Deforest, elderly; Cliff, the ne'er-do-anything-good, now defunct and leaving a

widow, Irmatitude; Mrs. Bramton-Deforest Burns, widow; and John, the youngest of them all, just thirty-eight in the year 1919. The Bramton-Deforests were "old Philadelphians." Their father had left a number of millions which had been equally divided among his children, Cliff excepted. Cliff had been willed an ample income, nothing more. For, long before their father had died, Cliff had engaged deeply in "living" in New York. So his father, having "sized up" the qualifications of his younger son, had made John executor and manager general of the entire estate. It had tied John to Philadelphia and the family circle and compelled him to be adviser and caretaker and "the family goat generally, *damn it!*" John frequently confided to himself. At twenty-eight he had gone into harness.

For instance, there was this affair of Cliff's. Cliff had "done" New York so thoroughly that he had given himself a weak heart when suddenly he had married the daughter of a physician in the small New England town where he had gone to recuperate. She was the very young widow of a Professor Hast-

ings, and was unencumbered by this world's goods—unless her stepdaughter Priscilla came under that head. Then Cliff had brought his bride to Philadelphia. There had been only a year of it; then there had been trouble. Irmature had been a perfect wife; even the Bramton-Deforest ladies had conceded that, in spite of their distrust of her.

"She married Cliff because she saw money in it. No sane woman would marry Cliff for any other reason," the eldest Miss Bramton-Deforest had maintained.

They had been exceedingly nice to Irmature, however; she had become a Bramton-Deforest, and their family meant much to them.

John had thought differently, but he rarely contradicted his sisters. He had trouble enough on his hands looking after their investments. John thought his sister-in-law a charming and unsophisticated girl who had fallen in love with Cliff, as had many another woman. What would the secluded girl widow of an old college professor in a little New England town know about a man like Cliff? John both liked and pitied Irmature. She had been devotion itself to Cliff, even after the first six months, when he had begun to neglect her shamefully. Cliff had married her because she was beautiful and too clean-natured and well-reared to be secured in any other way.

Then, at the end of the year—that had been a year before the war began—one morning John's eldest sister had burst in upon him as he was shaving. She was verging on hysteria.

"John! It's Cliff—and Irmature! She has letters of Clara's to Cliff—*such* letters! *Clara Bernard*, John! Right in our own set, and Jimmie Bernard's wife and two children! You know Clara's always cared for Cliff, the crazy woman! What *shall* we do? Irmature came to see me before I was out of bed this morning, and she's go-

ing to sue right away and make Clara corespondent to it! Irmature was just calm with rage—"

John had had time to think.

"Has she talked to anybody else about it?" he had asked.

"No, no—we are the only ones who know—and Clara's father, of course. I begged Irmature not to do anything till I'd talked with you, but I'm afraid she'll see a lawyer before you can stop her. If she sues, Clara's father will fight, and you know the money he has behind him. There'll be a fearful scandal! I believe it's money Irmature is after. I always said so. And, John, I'll pay toward it—to keep her quiet—we all will. Oh, John, do arrange it!"

"The family goat!" John had said to himself. But his sister was in a deplorable state, and it was a nasty business. Aloud he had said:

"Now calm yourself, Martha. Don't speak of it to anybody. Just try to have a little more confidence in Irmature and leave the thing to me."

He had barely put the troubled lady into her limousine when Clara's father had appeared. He had looked haggard, but he had not used so many words.

"I don't need to tell you how I feel, John," he had said. "I have no excuses to offer for Clara. The thing is what's to be done? If—well, if money is any consideration to Mrs. Bramton-Deforest—"

John had grown hot.

"I think not," he had answered icily. "She feels outraged—that's all. I shall see her, but our family will settle its own money questions, thank you."

The old gentleman had gone off, begging his pardon. He and John's sister had thought alike about Irmature, but John's interview with her had proven them wrong.

"I don't want to bring trouble and disgrace on everybody," she had told John sadly. "But what am I to do? I simply *can't* go on with Cliff. I was

terribly angry, but I've had time to think. Why should all of you suffer because of those two? Would Cliff provide for me and Priscilla? I must consider Priscilla, John. Would you all provide for me, if I just went away somewhere and lived?" She had been pitiful, with all the color gone from her face and her hazel eyes full of tears.

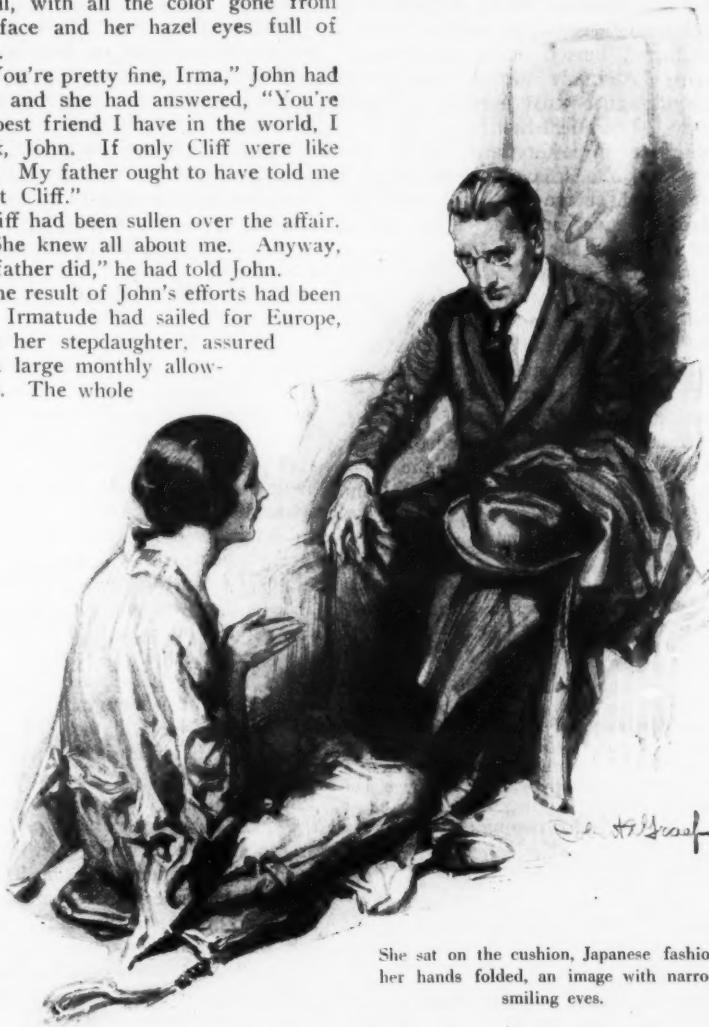
"You're pretty fine, Irma," John had said, and she had answered, "You're the best friend I have in the world, I think, John. If only Cliff were like you! My father ought to have told me about Cliff."

Cliff had been sullen over the affair.

"She knew all about me. Anyway, her father did," he had told John.

The result of John's efforts had been that Irmatitude had sailed for Europe, with her stepdaughter, assured of a large monthly allowance. The whole

family had contributed. Then Cliff had washed his hands of the affair; John was to forward the allowances and all that. For the last five years, it had been more as if John had had an absent wife who wrote him regularly, acknowledgments of checks of course,



She sat on the cushion, Japanese fashion, her hands folded, an image with narrow, smiling eyes.

but at the same time interesting and affectionate letters. Of Priscilla, Irmatude wrote, "I am trying to give her a good education." John had admired her devotion to her stepdaughter.

For a year Irmatude had traveled about; then, when the war had come, she had lived in Paris. Contrary to the predictions of his sisters, she had conducted herself well, no entanglements. And only once had she overrun her allowance—that episode at Monte Carlo. There had been a piteous cable asking for three thousand dollars.

"Dear John, I have done something I never did before and will never do again—I have gambled. I am sick of it," had been the gist of it.

John had said nothing to the family; he had sent his own money. Irmatude and her future had become his affair. The thing had steadily grown on him; he had begun to fight his desire for her. He treasured Irmatude's lovingly grateful acknowledgment of his cable.

Priscilla also had acknowledged the cable. John had never seen the child, but her letter had interested him. She had written:

DEAR MR. BRAMTON-DEFOREST: I want to thank you for your cable of money. It came quickly. I think nobody was ever sicker over losing money than Irma is. You see, they win in the begining, which is fatal. I cannot see the fascination of it, but I like to watch their faces.

We are going to Paris to live. Germany is fighting the French, and I think it will be a bloody war, for the kind of men who think it is noble to cut up each other's faces in fun will love to carve up their enemies. I did not like Germany. Their language and manners are not pleasing, and they will not burry a poor dead person unless it can prove that it has been born. It has to show a berth surfficate. I experienced such an uncurrence myself.

Irmatude is writing to you in bed herself, but the money you send takes care of me, too, and three thousand dollars is a large amount. I hope to earn my living as soon as I am older. I want to be an author. I just wanted to tell you this and to thank you, so please do not answer. Irma does not know I am writ-

ting, and it does not need to be mensioned.

Yours faithfully,

PRISCILLA HASTINGS.

John had laughed aloud over this letter. A regular puss-in-boots, that child! "It does not need to be mentioned!" What spelling! Why, she must be about sixteen? An incorrigible speller, evidently, but an honest little soul troubled over being a burden to him. He was loyal to a confidence; he had not "mensioned" Priscilla's letter to Irmatude.

But in the years of war that had followed, when Irmatude had written that she was doing her bit in Paris, and he himself had become a dollar-a-year man in Washington, John had often thought of "I think it will be a bloody war." The observant little girl had been quite right.

Then, in March 1919, Cliff had died. How his weak heart had held out so long was one of the mysteries. John had waited; he had done what he thought was right, in spite of the thing that had tugged at him, and he felt that Irmatude understood and had done what she thought was right. John had cabled; then he had written. "Don't worry about money," was one of the things he had written. "Your allowance will go on just the same. I am coming to you as soon as I can make the arrangements."

To his surprise, he received a letter from Irmatude, sent from California.

"I know you will understand, dear John, why I left Paris as soon as I received your letter and did not stop in Philadelphia. I know you will come to see me, but *please not for another month*, my very, very dear John."

John had understood; she had come to him, but she wanted no unseemly haste, no offense to the family. But he felt that he had waited long enough. In short, she was within four days of him, and he wanted the sight and the touch of her, and her promise.

He answered her letter by taking the first train; no telegram to announce him. He would arrive in the afternoon, then go straight to her apartment. No telephone conversation; he had had enough of talking to her from a distance.

John bathed and dressed. Then he was directed to Mrs. Bramton-Deforest's rooms. He knocked, and heard some one coming to the door. It opened and John faced, not Irmature, but a smaller and slighter figure clad in Japanese garments. He received an indistinct impression of a Japanesque face and black hair.

"Is Mrs. Bramton-Deforest in?" he asked, hoping that the maid understood English.

For a moment she regarded him gravely, eyes widened. Then suddenly, "John—Bramton-Deforest!" she said.

Priscilla! He had never seen her, but it could be no other.

"Yes. And this is Priscilla?"

She bowed profoundly.

"Yes—not the Japanese maid."

"You look Oriental enough, Priscilla."

"Of course. But Irma isn't here. She'll be back at four, though."

"I think—I'll wait here." John was disappointed, and showed it; he had been so certain it was Irmature coming to the door.

"Sit here, please. It's more comfortable."

Priscilla whisked some feminine apparel from the couch and thrust it into the bathroom, caught up a tiny pair of slippers, tidied up generally. John glanced about the room and wondered why Irmature was in such a place; it was very evidently a bedroom as well as a sitting room. Certainly she could afford a suite? Probably Cliff's death had made her feel poor. There was always Priscilla to "consider." But she should have had more confidence in him.

Priscilla was talking as she moved about, casting sidelong glances upon him the while. She saw a slender, tall, and very well-groomed man, with straight, fair hair carefully parted, aristocratic features, gray eyes, a vertical line between the brows, and eyeglasses. John answered her absently, and she fell silent. Then she brought a cushion from somewhere.

"Would you like this under your feet?" she asked.

John looked up at her, taking careful note of her now—her oval face, wealth of black hair, camellia-white skin, red lips, and long, faintly tilted eyes. But from beneath her heavy, thickly black-fringed eyelids there peeped at him eyes of a vivid blue. Her face was as immobile as a statue's, but the very devil of something looked at him out of her eyes. Mischief? Compassion? John did not know what. Was she making fun of him?

"No, thank you. Why?" he asked.

"I thought you wouldn't, but it would be politer to ask before I sat on it myself," and she placed the cushion about a yard from his feet and sat on it, Japanese fashion, her hands folded, an image with narrow, smiling eyes. A world of suggestion lay in her eyes.

John laughed out. Evidently she had resented his inattention. Certainly she knew why he had come and why he was downcast. But the sly impertinence of her, to suggest that he needed coddling!

"Do you still spell 'bloody' with two 'd's' and 'mentioned' with an 's'?" he asked smoothly.

It was a satisfaction to see her slow, consuming blush.

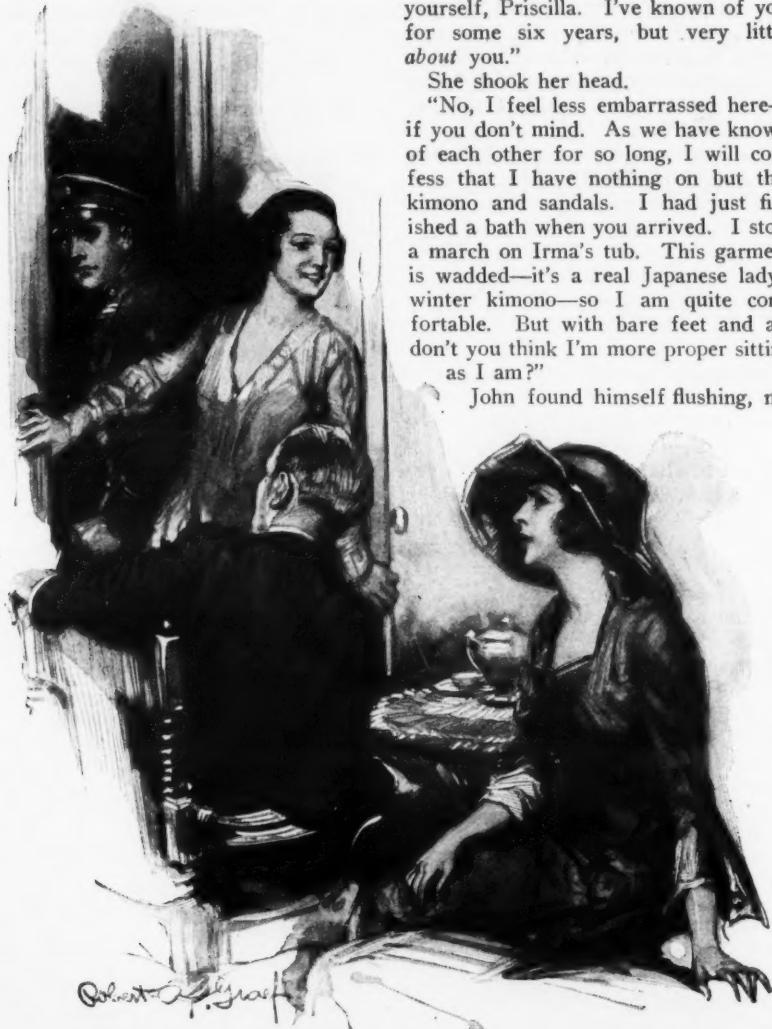
"Sometimes—yes," she answered confusedly. "You see, I never—" She caught herself up.

John wasted further revenge.

"You look rather like a heathen, sitting there. Is it your favorite position?"

Her eyelashes lifted, and a blue ray darted at him.

"Yes, when a severely perfect Buddha sits upon the couch."



"I think I'll go, too, Irma—if you'll excuse me." Her manner was faintly mocking.

John often cursed himself for looking both severe and perfect, but his sense of humor was unrestricted, and his laughter was genuine.

"Come up here and sit beside me," he urged. "I want you to tell me about yourself, Priscilla. I've known of you for some six years, but very little about you."

She shook her head.

"No, I feel less embarrassed here—if you don't mind. As we have known of each other for so long, I will confess that I have nothing on but this kimono and sandals. I had just finished a bath when you arrived. I stole a march on Irma's tub. This garment is wadded—it's a real Japanese lady's winter kimono—so I am quite comfortable. But with bare feet and all, don't you think I'm more proper sitting as I am?"

John found himself flushing, not

much because of some very natural thoughts that sprang into his mind, but because he was startled. An audacious little devil Irmatude must have on her hands! There was an exceeding daintiness about her, however, a gracefulness of speech and movement that was captivating. She appeared, also, to have a divining mind.

"Excuse me for mentioning a single garment," she continued. "It wouldn't disturb a heathen man at all, and a Frenchman would say something witty about it, whatever he *thought*, but an American *looks* unmentionable things."

This being his prospective stepdaughter, John was at a loss for words. But he was rescued from a dilemma. Priscilla suddenly sprang to her feet.

"*Mon Dieu!* There's Irma!" she exclaimed. "Do go to the door. That'll be a bigger surprise than you planned," and, catching her kimono about her, she scuttled into the bathroom. John was treated to a pair of bare pink heels.

John forgot Priscilla instantly. He sprang to the door and opened it wide. It was Irmatude—the same large, somewhat sad, hazel eyes, the waves of auburn hair, the exquisite profile, the same faintly pink cheeks. She had not changed at all.

"*Irma!*" he said.

"Why—John!" She paled, then flushed. "Yes—but this is Captain—Worth." Her surprise had almost overwhelmed her.

John had not noticed until then. A young officer stood just behind her. John met a pair of hot eyes under frowning brows. He shook hands with Irmatude; he bowed to Captain Worth. He had the desire to kill somebody.

But Irmatude put her hand on his arm and looked up at him.

"John—I am glad to see you," she said. But her eyes said far more; they told John everything, and he was content. The young officer became a negligible quantity.

Irmatude was graceful, as always.

"Do sit down, you two, and we'll have some tea. John, I shall scold you properly for this surprise! Why, Cyril, I haven't seen this brother-in-law of mine for five years. But where is Priscilla, John? We thought we heard her voice?"

"I'm here," Priscilla answered through the crack of the bathroom door. "I sent Mr. Bramton-Deforest to the door. I'm primping in here for the benefit of—Cyril."

That young man looked glum, but Irmatude laughed a little.

"Priscilla!" she said softly. She seated herself and asked John about the family. "And you, John—you haven't changed at all," she said.

She was radiant and smiling. She looked like a tea rose, slightly open. She had been a lovely girl; now she was a beautiful young woman. She was only twenty-eight.

Presently Priscilla joined them, properly clad. She looked at them all gravely. To Captain Worth, she said:

"Are you longing for tea, Cyril?"

"No." It was the first word he had spoken. He rose abruptly. "Excuse me," he said to Irmatude, and stalked out, a walking thundercloud.

Priscilla looked after him.

"Dear me!" she said softly; then, to Irmatude, "I think I'll go, too, Irma—if you'll excuse me."

Then she followed the angry-looking young fellow, and John caught a blue glint from her eyes as she departed.

"Priscilla, torments the boy!" said Irmatude. "You were here with her, and he's jealous. Oh, John, it hasn't been easy for me with her—"

"I imagine not!" John said with emphasis.

But what did those two matter at that moment? He went to Irmatude and put his arms about her.

"It's been a long time, Irma," he said against her lips.

"John—*how* I have wanted your strength and your dearness! I longed for you to come!"

It was eleven o'clock when John left her. They had talked it all over, and John had persuaded her to marry him on the twenty-first of May.

"A month from to-day, Irma," he had urged. "What does a mere conventionality matter? I'm sick to death of the usual uninteresting, merely conventional existence. I want *you*—and a different life altogether. I've appointed some one to look after my sisters' affairs. I'm free to live wherever we choose."

After he left her, John sat in his room for a time, smoking and thinking it over. Then, too excited for sleep, he went down to the lobby. There was dancing in the Rose Room, and he went in, chose a table, and watched the dancers. He saw then that Priscilla was dancing with Worth. They made a noticeable couple. The young fellow was handsome, in a black-browed, flushed way, and Priscilla looked like a tropical flower. Her filmy red gown emphasized her contrasts of black and white. She danced exquisitely. Then he saw a young officer cut into the dance and take Priscilla from her partner. Worth gave her up, but under protest, then wandered over in John's direction, his look gloomy. But when he saw John, he glared at him, straightened, and hastily left the room.

"The fool's been drinking," was John's mental comment.

But he was not prepared for what followed. The dance over, Priscilla and her partner came over to him.

"Have you seen Cyril?" Priscilla asked.

"He went out a few minutes ago," John answered.

"Whew! I suppose he'll kill me!" her partner exclaimed.

"Go and talk to him, Jack," Priscilla

said. "I've done all I can," and she sat down with an air of weariness.

"I suppose I'd better," he answered, and went off.

"May I order for you?" John asked Priscilla.

"No, thank you." She propped her chin with her hand and looked at him. "Are you happy?" she asked gravely.

John studied her for a moment. Irmatude had told him an interesting thing about Priscilla. The girl might well look Oriental, for her mother had been an Eurasian. It was an interesting bit of history. Priscilla's grandmother had belonged to a very good Japanese family and she had married an American, an author of marked ability. It was their daughter whom Professor Hastings had married, and Priscilla was their child. The girl was beautiful and unusual—John realized it fully now; a touch of the Oriental vivified by the Occidental.

"What are you going to make of life, Priscilla?" he asked after that moment's pause.

Instantly the daring imps sprang into her eyes, but before she could answer, they were interrupted. An elderly officer and two naval men had taken the next table. The army officer glanced up, then sprang from his chair.

"The little Typhoon—as I'm living!" he exclaimed.

Priscilla whirled, then rose and stood at attention.

"*Mon général!*" she said, saluting. Her face was alight.

He patted her cheek.

"Priscilla, child, what are you doing here?"

"In the wake of my stepmamma, general." Then she turned to John. "Brigadier General Cranston—this is Mr. John Bramton-Deforest, my stepmother's brother-in-law."

"The Bramton-Deforests of Philadelphia? I knew your father, sir," the general said as they shook hands.



Priscilla whirled, then rose and stood at attention. "Mon General!" she said, saluting.

"I remember you now, general. You visited us."

"Long ago, that was! Come over to our table, you two?"

But Priscilla declined.

"*Merci bien, mon général!* But it

is one o'clock, and I must go. To-morrow—we will talk to-morrow!" she said gayly. "Oh, stepbrother-in-law, take me up and deposit me at my door, or I shall be spending the night with the general!" and she tripped away with a

gleaming glance backward at the pleased old man and the two naval officers, who had risen and were smiling at her in open admiration.

John was smiling, also. She was so vividly alive and provocative; merely looking at her quickened a man's pulse.

Even in the elevator, she reminded him of a brilliant butterfly; her eyes glanced and gleamed. She said, "Third," to the elevator boy, and John said, "That's not



He caught her up and kissed her many times. "Learn that you can't do that kind of thing with impunity," he said thickly.

right," but she stepped out. "Yes, it is. Didn't Irma tell you I had a room of my own?"

He followed her into a short corridor. Then, at her door, she turned, and John heard what she was saying to herself:

"The little Typhoon! Those *were* days!" She looked at him, her eyes half gay, half sad. "It's what they called me in France."

"It describes you," John said admiringly. "You look a tropical storm, black and white and scarlet."

"Bend your head, Monsieur John, and I'll tell you something."

But when John bent to her, she kissed him softly on the lips. He lifted with a jerk, and then he saw her eyes, a mocking imp in each of them, and anger and a much profounded emotion swept through him, turning him hot. He caught her up and kissed her many times.

Then he put her down.

"Learn that you can't do that kind of thing with impunity," he said thickly.

She looked up at him, lips parted and eyes misty. Then she turned abruptly and hid her face against the door; her slender shoulders shook like a crying child's. John endured it for some moments. Then he said, breathing heavily:

"I don't want to leave you this way. I don't understand you, Priscilla. I'm sorry I was rough."

"Go away! I was only of-offering my congratulations," said Priscilla. "I'm not —crying. I'm laughing. Go away! Somebody'll see us——"

For the life of him, John could not tell whether it was laughter or tears. He longed to turn her about, but he was too much afraid of himself; his face was still scorching. He left her as she was. When he reached the main corridor, he looked back. She had disappeared.

Before morning, John had had it out with himself. It behooved him to keep away from Priscilla. As for Priscilla's performance, it had been a bit of sheer mischief, concentrated impishness. One thing was certain—she should form no part of his and Irmatitude's ménage.

That day, in answer to his questions, Irmatitude disclosed a history:

"I've had endless trouble with her, John. She's a strange and difficult girl. Perhaps because of the Oriental in her, she seems to have no moral sense. In Paris, the last two years, she was utterly ungovernable. They called her 'the little Typhoon.' She fascinated men, young and old. I was in perpetual terror over her. I've tried hard. I wanted her to love me. I did my very best, John, but Priscilla is what she is." There were tears in Irmatitude's voice.

John looked grave.

"What is this affair of hers with Worth?" he asked.

"I don't know, John. Priscilla will not give me her confidence, and she will not take advice. He followed us from Paris. His resignation is in, I suppose he got leave. I can't prevent his being here. The best I could do was to try to chaperon them."

"Who is he, Irma?"

"His people are Southerners, I believe, and his father is wealthy."

"Priscilla told me she had a room downstairs."

"Yes—and it has worried me. There's something I must tell you, John. From some source, Priscilla has money. Her independence of me be-

gan in Paris. You can understand why that has terrified me. I was so glad when she consented to leave Paris with me, but it's been just the same here. She took that room and it's only occasionally that she comes up here to me."

The vertical line between John's brows deepened.

"Men think they can judge," he said thoughtfully. "I hadn't judged her—that sort. Do *you* think she is loose, Irma?"

Irmatitude flushed deeply.

"I—I wish you wouldn't ask me," she said in distress. "I know I've reached the end of my endurance. And, John, she isn't a child. Priscilla will be twenty-one this month."

John said no more. Irmatitude would never have reached such a decision without reason. It eliminated Priscilla from their future. He carefully avoided her, for a week seeing her only at long range. She danced every night with Worth. But John thought about her, and, in a quiet way, he began to make inquiries. He made friends with Jack, and he talked with General Cranston. From them, he learned much about the little Typhoon. Finally his thoughts of Priscilla absorbed him to the point of harassment.

Then, one night, he went early to the Rose Room. Priscilla was dancing with Jack. Worth was not in the room. Suddenly John went to Priscilla and asked her to dance. She flushed in that slow way of hers and refused.

"I shall not dance any more, thank you. Why this sudden attention?"

John looked at her steadily.

"I will tell you later."

She studied him through narrowed eyes. Then, "Oh, very well!" she said. "Will you excuse me, Jack?" and she rose into his arms.

"For the remainder of the evening," John said over his shoulder to the boy, and Jack half laughed, half shrugged.

"Being it's you," he said. To himself, he said, "He's falling for the little Typhoon. Lord, what a mix-up! But Worth may find things out for himself. No complications for mine!" To which resolution he adhered.

John danced rarely, but he danced exceedingly well, and Priscilla was an adept. In the beginning, she glanced up at him occasionally, and he met her eyes with a steady intentness, but she said nothing, and he said nothing. They danced again and again—gave themselves up to it, but in perfect silence. In the intermissions, chin in hand, Priscilla talked demurely of books, the climate, and the like, the imps springing in and out of her eyes, and John followed her lead, the color in his cheeks, but his eyes unswerving. They danced until the music withdrew.

"And now I shall 'deposit' you at your door," he said.

"I wouldn't," she advised. "That's dangerous."

From the look of her, John judged that it might be, but he said, both eyes and voice steady, "Very well, Priscilla," and they went up in silence. She unlocked her door, then turned.

"I hope you've enjoyed the evening?" she asked, mouth grave, eyes mocking.

"I've waited throughout for this moment." His gaze held her, if his arms did not.

For all her bravado, she was uneasy. Her breath came quickly.

"I don't understand you at all," she quoted huskily.

"May I tell you something—in your ear?" he returned in the same steady, purposeful way.

"Why, certainly," with lifted brows.

John drew her to him, bent and whispered. Then he straightened and looked down at her. She drooped, defiance, mockery, impishness gone; her face had crimsoned, and her lips were quivering.

"Will you?" he asked.

She nodded, groped for the door-knob, and went uncertainly into her room. John watched the door close.

In the days that followed, John Bramton-Deforest appeared to have thrown honor to the winds. He spent the usual amount of time with Irma-tude, but more time with her step-daughter. Priscilla's room was small and uncomfortable and far down in the court, but John spent hours there. He never took the elevator to "Third," he used the stairs, and he always turned into Priscilla's corridor with a careful glance backward.

But judging from the look of him, he was far from happy. When alone, he looked harassed and grim; he walked his floor impatiently. Then, one night, he left for the East, and without seeing either Irma-tude or Priscilla. He wrote a note to each. To Irma-tude he wrote:

"Martha has telegraphed me to come at once, and I am leaving by the first train I can get. She doesn't explain why they want me. It's too late to disturb you by telephone, so I am writing. I shall be back on the twentieth. I am sorry, Irma. At the present moment, I am feeling about as unhappy as a man can feel. Will telegraph and write, and I shall be back on the twentieth."

To Priscilla, he wrote more briefly:

"I am leaving to-night on business, but will be back on the twentieth. Keep busy and happy, little Typhoon."

Whatever the cause of his going, John kept his word, for he returned on the morning of the twentieth. Shortly afterward, he knocked on Priscilla's door, and, at her faint call, he went in. His eyes sprang at her, and then he grew white, for propped against the pillows and with a coverlet over her knees, sat Priscilla, her loosened hair framing a ravaged face. She



"Will you excuse me, Jack?" and she rose into his arms.

"For the remainder of the evening," John said over his shoulder to the boy.

was pallid, with lines of pain about her eyes.

"*Priscilla!* Are you ill?" he exclaimed, his voice suddenly husky. He went and bent over her.

Her lips smiled, but not her eyes.

"Yes—I have been," she answered lifelessly. "So you're back."

She looked up at him, a slow move-

ment of the head, as if motion were painful.

"What is it, little Typhoon?" he asked, with mingled fright and tenderness.

"Just—nerves," she said with an effort. "Don't be frightened. I'm getting well. The doctor said—just nerves."

John drew up a chair and sank into it. He took her hand and stroked it gently. She had been very ill, no doubt of it; she was still ill.

"Have you been writing too hard?" he asked. "Or has something happened?"

She looked at him gravely.

"I haven't written since you left. I've had a scene with Irma."

John's face darkened.

"Did she tell you what I wrote her from Philadelphia?"

"No. I told her a few things that I never told you because I wanted you to find her out without any help from me. I told her she had robbed you—that she had taken a huge allowance from your family, pretending it would be used for herself and for my education, then had saved every cent of it—hidden it away on good interest—while we lived meanly on the little money which, I found out only a few days ago, had been paid to her by my mother's people for my education; that she had barely fed and clothed me and had given me no education at all and had made me believe that I was a burden to you; that she had driven me to earning my living by writing, even though I couldn't spell, just because the gift was in me; that she had married your brother, in spite of all her father had told her about him, just gambled on making money out of it; that she had gambled on marrying you before you could find out that she had deceived you throughout; that she wore the face of a Sister of Charity and had no more heart than a brickbat. I told her that she was a miser and a gambler, both—and a dishonorable, despicable hypocrite from her—marrow—out!"

It was a typhoon of words, but evenly delivered; she ended gasping, but not from excitement, merely from weakness. Her eyes closed; she looked ghastly.

John sprang for water and a towel, and bathed her face and hands; he thought she had fainted. He was too terrified for words. He watched her revive, his own face white and drawn, and when she looked at him again, he kissed her hands in sheer relief.

"You told her only the truth," he said. "But why did you make yourself ill over it?"

A flicker of satisfaction crossed Priscilla's face.

"So you have found her out completely. I thought you would. It didn't make me ill to tell her what she is."

"Then why are you like this?"

She put his question aside.

"You know, then, that Irma married Cyril Worth yesterday, and that she's gone?"

"*Irma—married Worth!*" In the extremity of his amazement, John rose to his feet. Then, like a flash, "But you told me you didn't care for him?"

"I told you the truth. I've always told you the truth. But I didn't tell you that the silly, infatuated boy had followed Irma here. Irma's having committed murder wouldn't have stopped him. Cyril has no sense yet—he's only twenty-three. When he gets older, Irma will have trouble with him, for he has a bad temper and he drinks. He will stop caring for her, by and by. Then he'll care for some other woman, and there'll be trouble. Cyril's that kind."

"He couldn't marry her in Paris. She was married. When your brother died, she meant to marry you. She came out here to do it. Then Cyril followed her. She didn't expect that. Then you came. She wanted to get rid of Cyril, but you surprised her by coming early. She knew then that she was skating on thin ice. Your fortune was better worth trying for than Cyril's father's money—it was not such a risky gamble—but, if you found her out,

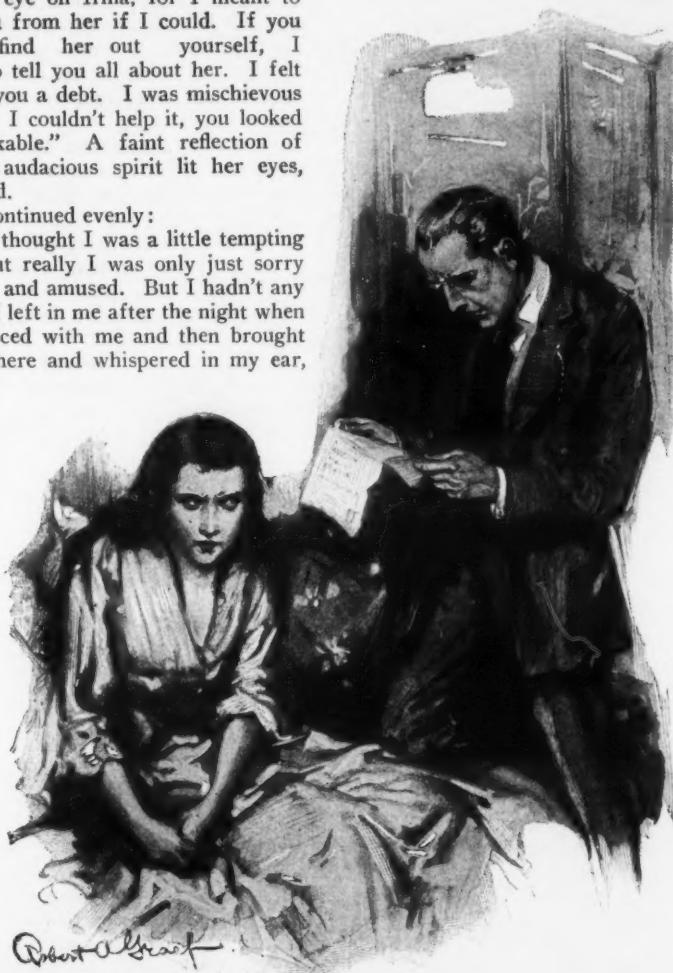
Cyril might be useful, so she kept him dangling.

"I was sorry for Cyril, and I tried to be nice to him. I came over here because I thought I could do better with my writing here, and, too, I wanted to keep an eye on Irma, for I meant to save you from her if I could. If you didn't find her out yourself, I meant to tell you all about her. I felt I owed you a debt. I was mischievous at first. I couldn't help it, you looked so shockable." A faint reflection of the old audacious spirit lit her eyes, then died.

She continued evenly:

"You thought I was a little tempting devil, but really I was only just sorry for you, and amused. But I hadn't any mischief left in me after the night when you danced with me and then brought me up here and whispered in my ear,

'I do understand you now, Priscilla. You've been rather a lonely, struggling little girl and a splendid little soldier. The general has told me how you drove an ambulance behind the lines. Jack says that your war stories sold well,



John took the letter, as completely bewildered as he had ever been in his life,
and his eyes sped down the sheet.

and he says that now you're writing a book. Let's be pals. I'll come and correct your spelling. Will you?" It was fun after that, wasn't it? I tapping away on my typewriter, getting off a short story so I could have bread and butter, and you with your nose in my book. You said I'd not spelled anything right but the 'buts' and the 'ands,' but that it was a good novel, in spite of being rather youthful. Then you ordering up lunch for me because you suspected that I had had only a cracker for breakfast. No nonsense—just pals. It was nice, wasn't it?" But she spoke sadly; as if she were saying farewell.

John had dismissed his surprise with a shrug and had listened intently.

"It wasn't all fun for me," he said grimly. "Now tell me—*why are you like this, Priscilla?*"

Again she set the question aside.

"Why did you go away?" she asked. "I had a fright. I thought you had suddenly married Irma—that I had waited too long for you to find her out yourself. I nearly fainted before I found that *she* hadn't gone."

"Did your fright make you ill?" John asked eagerly.

"No. Tell me why you went?"

"Partly because my sister sent for me, partly because I was wretched. You see, Priscilla, I had loved Irma a long time, and she wasn't ringing true. I felt that she had purposely given me a wrong impression of you. I thought you—well, a mischievous little devil, but I couldn't believe what Irma had said about you. Then Jack told me about your ambulance driving and your writing stories, and the general told me. He said, 'Why, the little Typhoon would have swirled across No Man's Land and have fallen upon the Germans if we'd have let her! She's the whitest and the most intrepid little soul that ever breathed! And game! Many's the poor boy that passed out smiling with the little Typhoon holding

his hand and joking him, making him laugh at death. French and Americans and English—black, white, and yellow, for that matter—the boys adored her. We gray heads, too. She has *one* medal—she ought to have twenty.'

"Then I asked you to be pals. I felt that I owed you an apology, but in reality it was just the eternal thing, Priscilla—I wanted to be with you. But I'm the sort who holds to a promise. I tried to excuse Irma. I tried to think that naturally your fire and independence would shock her sense of propriety. Between the two of you, I was pretty wretched. But when I saw my sister in Philadelphia, she told me a thing I couldn't swallow. I had written her about my engagement, and she had mentioned it to the father of the woman who was the cause of the trouble between Cliff and Irma, and the old gentleman had told her that, back at the time of Irma's separation from Cliff, he had secretly paid her a large sum for some damaging letters of his daughter's to Cliff, and that was the reason Irma had consented to an allowance and a departure to Europe." The contempt in John's voice was vivid. "Irma had taken hush money. I wrote to her that our engagement was at an end. I've been honest with you, Priscilla. Now tell me why you sit there with a face like death."

She was silent.

"I didn't mean to tell you so soon, but I've told you—that I love you. That's what brought me back. Why do you torture me like this?" He had flamed into sudden passion.

Priscilla's features hardened into stone.

"I—I thought you would say that—when you came back," she said slowly. "I've worried over it all—until I am ill. For I don't love you. You must never ask me again. *I can never love you.*"

John sat with eyes fixed on her dull gaze. Then he rose uncertainly.



"I had hoped you did—a little," he said, more to himself than to her. "It's natural—of course. I'm seventeen years older than you." He looked sixty at that moment.

He turned, then whirled at her cry of pain.

"I can't bear it!" she said wildly. She sat erect, a shaking bit of paper held out to him. "I lied. It's this! Read it!"

John took the letter, as completely bewildered as he had ever been in his life, and his eyes sped down the sheet:

*Tanaka & Yoshino
Attorneys at Law
Nagasaki.*

To the Miss Priscilla Hastings.

MY DEAR MISS HASTINGS: The firm of Tanaka & Yoshino, of Nagasaki, begs to inform you that, with the arrangements between your honorable father and the Miyoshi family of your mother, the sum of two thousand dollars yearly has been regularly paid into the hands of your guardian appointed by your father, the now Mrs. Cliff Bramton-Deforest. The said sum was appointed by the Miyoshi family for the purposes of your education and travel, until you should reach the age of your majority. Then such payments to ceased.

We beg to congratulate you on majority,

and assure you of pleasure to having been at your service. Yours respectfully,

TANAKA & YOSHINO,
ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW.

John looked down with equal bewilderment at Priscilla's agonized face.

"But—why, you just told me that she had appropriated your money!"

"No, no, not *that!*" Priscilla said with a piercing note of hope and despair. "The other! I didn't know it—until that letter came—that I was part Japanese. And she said—Irma said, when I went to her with it—that a Bramton-Deforest would rather *die* than—marry me."

At last John understood; the blood swept into his face.

"But I knew! She told me! Why, it *interests* me! It's one of the things I've loved in you!"

He had dropped to the couch and reached for her, but she was already in his arms, on his knees, her arms about his neck and her cheek pressed to his, quivering, half sobbing, clinging to him like one rescued from drowning.

"My own—little—Typhoon!" John whispered.



HEAVEN HAS A WINDOW

HEAVEN is a little square white room,
Very white and very small and very square;
And there is only space for your hat and coat to hang,
And for my rumpled dress and new stockings there.

Heaven has a window that opens on the sea.
The water pulls the dark down out of the sky;
It fears it, but it pulls it down, piteously.
Then comes the strange, great silence, when all sounds die.

I know the shape of heaven, and its little space;
I know the way the wind blows through the window on one's face,
Very low and very square and very small and white
Is the little stateroom that was ours last night.

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.



The White Circle

By Helen Ellwanger Hanford

ILLUSTRATED BY GORDON GRANT

A story as strong and beautiful and touching as this does not reach us every month. After you have read it, you will understand why we are so especially glad to present it to the readers of SMITH'S.

SO you see," said John Richards with a laugh, "you've lost your case. I've got you there!"

They stood at the door, the three—David Moore and his host and hostess—for as usual, when he had risen to go, Richards had followed him out to the hall, friendly fashion, and then, as they had lingered there, prolonging a discussion begun an hour before, Cecile had drifted out and now stood with her arm linked in her husband's, smiling indulgently at his animated mood.

"Yes," repeated Richards, "I've got you. You can't disprove *that*!" He looked at David with clear, kindly eyes, as he had looked so often in the ten years that the younger man had known him.

"Yes, you've proved it," replied David reluctantly. "You always prove everything, you know. But I maintain that there's a realm where proof doesn't count—that some things don't conform to proof; they defy it. You can prove them away, and up they'll bob again presently."

"Ah, you're a dreamer," replied Richards with another laugh. "You'll probably never grow up. But I won't tell any of your patients, my rising young man. *We* like you as you are,

don't we, Cecile?" He turned to his wife.

"We like him very much," said Cecile, "but he's not a dreamer, John. That's your province. Your very hair proclaims it. Though I can't see," she added with her low laugh, "why a mere argument on astral matters need rumple it quite so much." She stood on tiptoe and smoothed down the heavy gray hair, comically upstanding.

David looked from one to the other with the sensation of sickness that had become, in the last few weeks, his normal feeling. The constant effort to hide it was beginning to show in a face always sensitive to impressions. One saw it most in the restlessness of the dark eyes and in the troubled lines about them. He turned sharply away to the door.

"But you don't like me well enough to stand here all night!"

"John," said Cecile suddenly, "I want to show Dave something—that brooch I picked up the other day. Get it for me, there's a dear."

She gave laughing, elaborate directions for finding it, pushing him lightly toward the stairs and watching him as he went off on his quest, grumbling cheerfully. Then she turned to David.

"I thought we'd never have a minute!" she breathed.

She stood looking up at him, her face blooming like some rare tropical flower from the stem of her lovely neck. Under the soft red folds of her dress, her skin gleamed white. She said nothing more, but stood with a smile, her dark eyes drawing him irresistibly. Just so they had stood two months ago in this very hall, when, after days of a vague unrest, he had suddenly learned what had happened to him. Only then, after that one revealing glance, he had stumbled out of the house, had made a desperate, if ineffectual, attempt to keep away. It was John himself who had brought him back, chiding him for neglect.

Now he stood, half stupefied, looking at her, all the fight gone out of him. It was that—the feeling of utter helplessness—that confused him most. For weeks it had been his constant companion, never leaving him as he traveled on what seemed to him an endless series of concentric circles, drawing slowly nearer and nearer, whether he would or no, to the center. He was very close to the center now; he felt that with a sharp pang, as she turned at a fancied sound, her listening attitude a thing of exquisite young curves.

Half sick with longing, he watched her. When she turned to him again, he clutched at her soft hands. She was in his arms, in their first embrace.

"It can't go on," he heard himself muttering, "all this! It can't go on!"

"No," she murmured.

He saw, pushing her face up, that she was still smiling.

"Oh, my God, Cecile," he cried, his face tortured, "do you care as I do?"

She nodded slowly.

"Yes, I care," she said. "I do care," she added more quickly. "Ah—"

With a rapid change of manner, she ran to meet her husband, who appeared at the landing empty-handed.

"There were boxes and boxes," he excused himself, "but not that box."

She chided his stupidity.

"But never mind," she laughed. "It isn't absolutely necessary. I'll show Dave next time."

It was late when David reached home. He went into his library, stirred up the fire, and threw himself down in a chair at the table. The shaded lights beside him left much of the room in shadow, but he was vaguely conscious of the spirit of the place—everything in restful tones, everything bespeaking a mind at leisure to use itself. It had been his father's before it was his; the books, many of them, came from his father's father. Always he had felt a strong continuity of race as he had worked or read here, looking up sometimes at the portrait of his father and meeting those fine eyes.

He felt like an alien now. Nothing of the calm of the distinguished past was in him. His body was on fire; his brain was like some thick, enveloping cloud, shot through by the light of one idea. When he tried to think, it was like looking at some kaleidoscope whose figures shifted and changed too quickly for his mind to retain them. Ugly, distorted figures they were, some of them, not to be dwelt upon—divorce, with all its attendant scandal; a new life among his old friends, who would watch him with half-averted gaze; and dominating everything else, though he shut his eyes to it, the agonized perplexity of that other man whose friendship he had dishonored.

No, living with all that would be impossible. He would go away, far away, with her; they would make no attempt to gloss over the deed. But all this must be planned, and in the endless days that had passed, their moments alone could be counted. Talk with her, long, uninterrupted talk, that he must have at once. He drew a sheet of writing paper toward him.



She gave laughing, elaborate directions for finding it, pushing him lightly toward the stairs.

"I must see you again at once," he wrote in hurried strokes of the pen. "Will you come—"

It seemed to him that he heard a slight noise in the hall, and he stopped writing, covering the paper with his elbow in a quick, defensive gesture.

There was no further sound, but the rapid change of mood had unnerved him, and he sat looking about him, at a loss.

His eye rested on two letters, lying unopened on his tray, and he picked them up with scant interest. The first

was from a Canadian lumber camp. Dalton had written him one of his infrequent letters. The two had been inseparable as boys and young men; then Moore had taken up medicine, and Dalton had drifted from one occupation to another until one summer he had chanced upon the strange, rough life of the forest. There, incomprehensibly, he had stayed.

"You should see me at my work," he wrote. "Only what is my work, you might ask. Not the overseeing job that brings me my daily bread. That, dear boy, is becoming an avocation. I spend many hours each week in the little town near by, such a poor, quaint place. Yesterday, I set an arm; last Sunday, I helped conduct a service at the little old hut of a church.

"There is much sickness, and no doctors and nurses, naturally. Little things don't bother us. We're a tough crowd and getting tougher. But there are other things. Last week a young woman died of pneumonia. We were as helpless, most of us, as the four little children that huddled around her bed. It was her service I spoke of. I thought of you and longed for a tenth part of your skill. You've always been so confoundedly successful, you know, Dave. And I'm always meaning to be! Do you remember that last night of our senior year, when we sat up till morning and planned—Good Lord, what didn't we plan? You were to—"

Moore crumpled up the letter and flung it from him, flinging with it, as best he could, the memories it evoked.

He picked up the other letter. It was from an old friend, a relative far removed, Mary Vernon, thanking him for some flowers he had sent her. She had been quite sick, was getting better, would see him soon and thank him again for the lovely violets, which she loved best of all, as he knew. This letter he laid aside more gently, so per-

sistently did some suggestion of the writer cling even to the paper she had touched. He must see her soon, he reflected. It was a shame he had not gone in before. Professionally he had never attended her; that she would not permit.

"If I must be sick," she had said once, "I'll tell all my woes to Doctor Hutchinson. He's old and doesn't mind. But to my contemporaries," and she had laughed softly up at him, "I want to be a person and not a patient!"

Yes, he would see her very soon. It gave him a sense of comfort even to think of her now. Underneath, he could feel the irresistible current sweeping him on, but as he yielded to it, he cast a glance back at the shore, at the old familiar landmarks. For minutes he sat, while all sorts of little half-forgotten memories stirred within him.

He came back to himself at last and to the letter that he must write and, taking up his pen, he found the sheet of paper. But as he touched it, he started violently and rose to his feet, for this time some one was really outside, was pausing at the door. For an instant, a wild thought that it might be Cecile sent the blood surging up into his temples. Then the door opened softly, and he saw to his amazement that it was Mary Vernon who stood there. She entered in her usual quiet fashion, looking—even in his confusion he saw this—very slight and fragile. There were deep shadows under her large gray eyes, and her face was thin and white. Nothing, however, could lessen the charm of that face—an elusive charm, depending neither on beauty of feature nor on bodily health and vigor, but on some hidden spiritual source. All this he realized more acutely at this moment than ever before, and the realization gave him a pang, almost of pain. How fine she was, how very, very gentle!

She smiled gently now as she advanced and stood at the other side of the table, looking at him without a word.

"Mary!" he cried uncertainly. "You've been sick. You're better?"

She nodded.

"Much better. It was just my stupid heart, but I'm all right now."

She put aside the subject as a matter of slight importance and seated herself in a low chair opposite him. For a moment she said nothing, and as she sat there, looking into the fire, her presence began, oddly enough, to seem quite natural. Almost he stopped questioning the strangeness of her coming alone at such an hour.

She looked up presently.

"I was passing by," she said, "just passing by, and I saw your light. Don't laugh at me, David. It's absurd, I know, but I had the strangest feeling, as if you were in danger! Have you ever felt that way? I have, just once or twice, and it's—compelling! I had to see you safe or I couldn't rest."

He was about to answer her lightly, moved though he was by her words, but as she finished, she caught her breath in a little sigh that was half a sob. The sound checked what he might have said. He sat in a silence which he did not know how to break. She sat silent, too. Outside, the wind had risen. He could hear it sighing through the branches of the great elm at his window.

"Hear the wind!" she whispered, lifting her slender hand and inclining her head toward him. It died down suddenly. One could hear every smallest sound in the room—the crackling of the fire, the slow ticking of the old clock. She looked at it steadily with a faint smile. Then she turned to him.

"You think it strange of me to be here," she said.

"Mary," he cried, "it was perfect of you to come! It was a thing that just you and no one else would do. But it's

so late for you and you've been sick. That worries *me*, my dear."

He looked at her, his face losing its strained and feverish look in a winning, boyish smile.

"Let me stay a little longer," she begged, like a child. "It's so quiet and restful here, so dear a room."

She looked about her, letting her eyes rest first on one familiar object, then on another. At last she looked directly at him.

"Davy," she said suddenly, and the name, his mother's name for him as a little boy, touched him poignantly, "you're quite right. It is strange for me to be here. But it's one of those things that *had* to be, and so, after all, it's not strange—it's just necessary. I was afraid for you, yes, but there was another reason for my coming in." She paused a moment, and her voice seemed to echo in the quiet of the room. "There's something I want to tell you, David, and I want to tell you now, because I'm going away soon on quite a long journey. They say I must. And journeys are uncertain things, you know. It may be very long before I'll see you again, and this thing I—I want you to know."

She bent forward in her frail loveliness, her lips parted, her exquisite face filled with some strong emotion.

"Some time, David, a strange thing will happen. At least you will think it strange—something that I shall have done—and for you. And when that time comes, I want to feel—oh, *certain* that you will understand, that you won't have to hunt for the answer and then perhaps not find it. So I'm going to give you the key right now, to keep until you find the lock that it fits."

Again she paused, looking at him from the shadowy depths of the chair where she sat. The light from the fire played about the room, touching one part and another with fitful gleams.



She had risen, and he would have risen, too, but she prevented him. "No," she breathed. "Let me look at you a minute—so, just so."

Her face needed no illumination. Its radiance awed him.

"And the key?" he asked gently, wondering, yet more intent on her than on the thing she was about to tell.

"Love," she said very clearly. "My love for you, more than for all the rest of the world put together, more love than I ever supposed one person could hold. That," she said, "will be why I did it." She stopped, breathing quickly.

"No, don't speak," she went on. "Don't you suppose I know all the dear things you would say? Do you think I

don't know your gentleness and finesse and sweetness through and through? That's why I've loved you, David, because there was never any one like you. Oh, there are so many people one likes who aren't really good, and then so many people that are good—but that's all! But there's only one of you. How could any one help but love you?

"It began when I was just a little, young girl. That was a wonderful time, just a thrill of joy and sadness and dreams. Then I grew older, and I saw—I can't tell you how, but quite clearly—that you would never think of

me in that way. Oh, I knew it very surely. I was ill that fall. Do you remember? The sickness and my unhappiness didn't last long. It went all in a night, a long, sleepless night, when I saw at last what it really was to love. I hadn't before, you see, not really. Since then, I've loved you every waking second, in every breath I've breathed, and it's all been happiness. For it's been"—she smiled at him—"a disembodied sort of love." She sat in a brooding silence, and, looking at her, he felt that she seemed so spiritualized as to be herself almost disembodied.

"That kind of love," she went on, "doesn't ask for anything; it only wants to give. Ah, but you gave, too. Just to be with you sometimes and think your thoughts and watch you was joy enough. It's been such *happiness* to watch you, to see the clean, steady growth. You've never had a success, David, that I haven't thanked God for. There's never"—her voice sank—"been a night that I haven't prayed Him to keep you as you were. The strange part of it is that I never wanted to tell you. I never even thought of doing it—until to-night, when suddenly I saw it was the one way—that you should know—that you *must* know—that all around you, always, always, David, never touching you, never binding you, is a little white circle, the white circle of my love; that you should know that there is nothing I wouldn't do for you, *nothing!* That," she finished on a low, gentle note, "is the way I have loved you." She drew a long breath, as of quiet relief. "Ah, it's all done now. I've seen you safe, and told you this. It's our secret forever and ever! And now—" The clock began to sound the hour in slow, measured strokes. "Oh, I must go!" she murmured.

She had risen, and he would have risen, too, but she prevented him.

"No," she breathed. "Let me look at you a minute—so, just so." Her eyes

dwelt on him in a long, intimate look. "God bless you, dear," she said.

"God bless you," he replied brokenly.

Later he was to remember that they were almost the only words he said to her.

"He will," she murmured. "Ah, I know He will, and you, David, you!"

He could not stand the touching beauty of her look longer, and covered his face with his hands. When he looked up again, she had gone. The chimes in a church near by had taken up the telling of the hour. There was no other sound.

He sprang up in a confusion so great that for a minute more he did not move. A hundred thoughts of things unsaid, undone, crowded into his mind. He had not so much as touched her hand in farewell; he had left her to find her way to the door alone. He hurried to the hall. She was not there. Back to his library, which gave a view of the street. He flung open the window. She had gone already. He did not even hear the car that must have brought her.

A gust of icy air smote him full in the face. How terribly cold, he thought with a shiver. And she—had she been warmly wrapped? He tried to remember how she had been dressed, but he seemed to have noticed nothing but her face, her gray eyes, the play of her little white hands. Her presence had been as unsubstantial as a dream; he had now only the memory of the unspeakable grace with which she had held out to him her chiefest treasure. That, too, had been dream fashion.

He was standing. He went back to his chair presently and sank into it, exhausted with the excitements and emotions of the night. Had he ever been quite so weary? He folded his arms on the table and just for a moment rested his head upon them. When the next hour struck, he was asleep.

He awoke to the loud jangling of the doorbell, a confused awakening that held for the moment no recollection of what had lately passed. It was morning, for a cold, early light mingled with the artificial light in the room. The fire had died out. He felt chilled and cramped. His very brain was numb. He had been at Cecile's, he remembered—

He heard the maid go to the door and throw back the bolt, and at the moment that circumstance did not surprise him. Then he heard his name, footsteps, and, at the door of the library, a voice which he recognized as that of the physician, Dr. Hutchinson:

"May I wait in here?"

The door opened, and Hutchinson was in the room.

"Ah, Moore, you're up?" He glanced at David questioningly.

"I'm very much up," replied David, with an attempt at lightness. "In fact, I've not been down. I came in late and fell asleep over my table. It wasn't made to be slept at!" He smiled ruefully.

"I thought perhaps you'd heard," said Doctor Hutchinson gravely, "though I couldn't see how. I came by to tell you at once," he added.

What thoughts hurled themselves in terrible confusion through David Moore's brain, he himself could scarcely have told. Cecile—John—black visions of death and horror—and then, forcing itself through the layers of confusion, another thought. What was it? *Who* was it? He was on the verge of capturing the strange impression; it eluded him—

Doctor Hutchinson went on.

"Miss Watson, Miss Vernon's nurse, called me up very early this morning. She had just found her. Miss Vernon died in the night."

"Died?" cried David. "Mary Vernon? It's impossible! Why, she was better. She said—"

"Then she wrote to you? I had told her she might write a note or two; she begged so hard. She's been a very sick woman, Moore, far more ill than she would let any of her friends know—and yet the end came very suddenly. Yesterday she seemed better—still confined to her bed, of course, but better. At night she was really almost like herself. Miss Watson went to bed late, and she says that at that time her patient was sleeping very quietly. She herself slept until five o'clock. Then she went into Miss Vernon's room. She must have died almost immediately after the nurse saw her, for she had been dead some hours."

Words at that moment were suffering to David Moore, yet something impelled him to one last question.

"But the cause?" he asked.

"Ah, that's it. We can think of no cause at all. Her trouble, you know—" Moore heard the technical terms, nodded assent, even put in a word. "So you see," finished the older man, "we had no reason to expect so sudden a turn. She seemed simply to have passed away in her sleep, unexpected as such a thing was. She was lying just as the nurse saw her, for she had noticed her attitude at the time; one couldn't help it. She was resting as quietly as a little child. She was smiling like a child, too. I never saw such a face of peace—and against her cheek she was holding a little bunch of flowers, violets. You couldn't think of death when you saw her. I never," went on Doctor Hutchinson with an effort, "had a dearer patient or knew a rarer spirit."

He stood for a moment with bowed head as if he were again in that quiet room, and the moment of stillness became, as it were, an eternity of silence, where one might pause forever and think. In it there came back to David, phrase by phrase, all that she had said sitting there in the shadow, words never

to be forgotten, since, as she passed, she had lingered to say them. Yes, he would know them now, with her, "forever and ever." And with the echo of those words in his ears, he saw life, not through a mist, but with a clear vision that pierced to the very core of things—life in its sordidness, life in its infinite purity; love of the flesh and that unspeakable love of the spirit; dishonor stripped of every shred of illusion; dimmer visions of service and sacrifice; love again, love for which even death was a pitiable foe to be vanquished with a glance, love that would not let him go, that encircled his being, tenderly compelling him to the ways of truth.

All this, and the moment of silence had ended. Doctor Hutchinson gath-

ered up his gloves and bag and turned to the door.

"I came to you at once," he said. "She had asked the nurse very especially—that if she were to die, you should be told at once."

Moore watched the other go and stood looking about him. On the floor was a crumpled letter. Mechanically, he stooped to pick it up, and as he walked over to the window, mechanically he smoothed out the sheet. Outside was a world of glittering snow, of pure morning peace. The sun had risen gloriously, and one clear shaft fell upon the paper he held, upon Dalton's written words. And suddenly David saw stretching before him, narrow and difficult, but exceedingly luminous, the way.

STARDUST AND THISTLEDOWN

REGRET them? Bright follies we've paid for, yet loved in the doing—
The fugitive touch; the talk in the dusk, overconfident, dear;
The desire of a moment to plunge all the spirit in heart-warming,
Luminous giving of self; delight in rash words
That etch themselves brightly on backgrounds of sorrow;
The kiss that was end and beginning, perilous, sweet;
First love, perchance, delicate, feather light,
Vagrant as starshine!

Shall they who are gallant, not cowardly, turn all this fabric
Of vigorous life into febrile regrettings and tears?

Ah, no! Lest the years
May rob the adventuring spirit of glorious dreams,
Of little gay gleams of a humorous sadness,
Linked with a kind of a whimsical madness
Filched from old Time by that madcap named Youth!

In the end may come Wisdom, and Reticence, too,
And, better than all, rugged Love who endures—
Whom Life cannot shatter or maim, with his mocking,
Whom Death cannot wither—while Memory burns.

And yet shall we treasure that mystical springing
Of reasonless joy, caught in cobwebs of beauty
That spin themselves out of invisible forces,
Like stardust and thistledown
Snared in a dream.

ELIZABETH NEWPORT HEPBURN.

Is Love Enough?

by
Virginia Middleton

Author of "How Often Can One Love?" "Intimacy and Allure," etc.

Shall she renounce the whole world for "love"? A sane, sympathetic discussion of an ever live topic. What do you think of Mrs. Middleton's views on the subject?

IT is like a lavendered breath from your grandmother's trunk in the attic to read the words. Is love enough? There used to be a time when the question was propounded with no real doubt of the answer—if the questioner were a woman. And, for that matter, there was very little doubt of the answer if the questioner were a man—but the answer was different.

It was easy in those days. Love was enough for a woman. Love was not enough for a man. But love—in order to make it agreeable and complimentary to the feminine sex—although it was not enough for the man, was the mainspring of all the diversified efforts which employed his extra-emotional faculties. They tried to make—and they pretty generally succeeded in making—women believe, in that sweet, credulous time, that Newton was thinking of his wife—if he had one—when he watched the apple fall, and that his attention had been glued to it by its resemblance to the curved beauty of her

cheek or the lovely rounding of her arm. They would have made women believe that Fulton invented the steam-boat in order to make swifter journeys to his inamorata—if he had one. They were always trying to keep women content with their lot as the sentimentalists of existence, were always trying to dull their intellectual ambitions, to still their intellectual rebellions, by saying, in effect:

"It is all the same thing, dears. He—your he, and yours, and yours—is the whole of your life; you exist in him and for him and in and for your mutual love. But really, though he may seem, to the uninstructed or the skeptical eye, to be playing baseball because he likes it, or building bridges because of an inner bridge-building urge, he is engaged in loving you. His activities are the secondary expressions of his love. Love is your life and it is the mainspring of his. So be content. Love is enough for any reasonable woman."



And then the women who took the answer seriously, and proceeded to act on the theory that love *was* enough—that it justified itself in all conditions—promptly found out the meaning of a figure of speech. Love was not all-sufficient as a reason, for example, for running away with the beloved one, if he happened to have any other claims upon him.

But the clever jugglers with words and codes explained even such discrepancies away, so that the theory was quite intact for the guidance of Arabella's sisters. They said that the feeling which prompted Arabella to elope to some bright little isle of her own with Algernon, when Deborah, in Framingham, Massachusetts, had a prior lien on him, was not love. It was infatuation; it was selfishness; it was—shameful as the word was, when used in connection with woman—mere lust. And thus Arabella, who had sought to justify her conduct by appeal to the teachings of her time, found out that she had, in the vulgar parlance of these degenerate days, "another guess coming."

All of which discourse upon the standards and ideals of a departed day is due to the fact that in the mail bag this morning there is a query which would denote that the day is not yet so thoroughly departed as—Bernard Shaw, let us say—would have led us to believe. Well, there are latitudes in which twilight lingers long! And because a certain intellectual day has withdrawn from the Rand School of Social Science, Greenwich Village, and the fiction of H. G. Wells, is no reason to believe that it does not still linger in other regions.

The young woman—she confesses to being twenty-eight—who brings the question, with its fragrance of grandmother's brocades and its strains from "The Bohemian Girl" into the world of conductorettes and women's land armies, into the world of jazz bands and

of women voters' leagues, tells a rather pathetic story. She is a school-teacher. She has reached her present age without having ever before known what love meant. She confesses to having listened enviously when girls of sixteen and eighteen, her companions, used to whisper exciting tales of "him" and what "he" said, and what his notes said, and what it meant when he passed down on the other side of Main Street in the afternoon, and never even looked across! She longed to share their excitements, but she couldn't. No boys ever walked home from school with her, and she didn't want them to—except for the purpose of being admitted to the charmed sisterhood of whispering confidantes. And so it went on until now, at twenty-eight, she has proceeded to fall in love with the father of one of her pupils, a man of forty-five.

"What can we do?" she asks. "He does not wish to divorce his wife, and there is no ground upon which he could, if he did want to. She has been guilty of nothing. She is a good woman, only he doesn't love her—never did love her. He has lived with her for twenty-three years, the victim of a boyish infatuation. It never mattered much to him until he met me. He had his business, in which he has been quite successful, and at home he had his books and his garden. She does not share his intellectual life at all, and she doesn't care much about the garden, either. She has her own life—the children, her woman's club, her house, her friends, bridges, luncheons, and so forth.

"What can we do? Is it so very wrong of me to love him? I can't help it. It is my fate. If I should do what he sometimes urges me to do—give up my teaching, give up my life here, go away to some place where he might come to see me without the criticism, which attends his visits in this narrow and provincial town—do you think I

would find that love was enough to fill my life? It almost fills it now, and I am so unhappy. So is he. Is love enough?"

Just what does the perturbed school-teacher mean by that question? Does she want to know whether love, divorced from useful activity, can fill a life with the peace and satisfaction which every human being is justified in seeking? Does she want to know whether love, the emotion of the heart, devoid of its legitimate fulfillment in action, can suffice to keep a woman happy?

Is she a transcendentalist of the school of Emerson? If she is, of course she will find love enough, and she will not even need to see the object of her affection. She can commune with him in the ether—or she can persuade herself that she is communing with him, which will answer just as well!

For a transcendentalist, love is enough. It is a lofty sentiment which may be cherished without the slightest interference with one's daily program. It takes up as little time, requires as little nourishment, as the "astral body" of the theosophist takes space or increases the baker's bill.

If you're a transcendentalist, dear girl, love is enough for you, and you don't even need to see your middle-aged adorer in order to find it enough.

But you probably aren't a truly Emersonian transcendentalist. Emerson himself wasn't, so why should you be? What you really want to know is something like this: If you give up your job, if you give up your home, your associations, your vocation and your avocation, and go away somewhere to live a clandestine life of intermittent meetings with him—are you going to find it "enough?"

On a rough calculation, the answer is "no." On further calculation, the answer is "no, no, no!"

In the first place, you've been a self-supporting woman. You will miss your

income—your own income. It doesn't matter that he might possibly make generous and even delicate provision for you. A woman who has made her own living doesn't ever learn really to enjoy dependence upon a man's liberality, even if he is her husband and she has every ground for accepting his support.

In the second place, you will miss your work. It seems too obvious to need saying. You have been teaching for six years. You have a profession. The only thing that could make it other than a tragedy for you to give up your profession would be the undertaking of another, equal or superior in interest and possibilities—the profession of motherhood, for example. But that is one which you would definitely renounce when you set out upon your love-is-enough expedition.

So there you would be, without occupation other than marcelling your hair and planning your clothes against your lover's visits, without your own valorously earned income, without friends, without self-respect. You would have your little intermittent periods of cessation from the fever. Love enough? You would be the most enfeebled woman in the world, and the most unhappy.

Even if your middle-aged adorer did what middle-aged adorers of settled incomes and habits very rarely do—even if he decided to "chuck" his career, his habits, his family, and to go off to that Vesuvian sea of which lovers always dream, and on which they always picture themselves blissfully adrift, even if he would do that, do you think you would find love "enough?" Where could you live? Somewhere in Europe, perhaps, where the native population wouldn't care anything about your morals and your marriage and your past because they wouldn't care anything about you, and because they would have a more or less definite idea that there was something shady about

all expatriate Americans, anyway. It would be a pretty lonely life. And even at that, it wouldn't be feasible for some time yet. Europe just at present doesn't offer the asylum to heterodox romance that she once did.

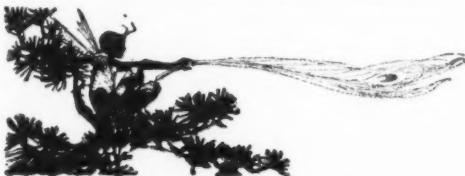
But granted that Europe must some time settle down to her old occupation and calling of pleasure ground for American tourists, how lonely it would be to go and live there without a business, without a profession! Scenery is beautiful, and art galleries are delightful, and "quaint corners" are adorable—for vacationing. But to fill one's life—what unutterable boredom! Your business man would probably be willing, after a year of it, to give the Bay of Naples, all the treasures of the Vatican, and you along with these trifles, for the sake of hanging his own hat on its own peg in his own office, for the sake of a high-heaped plate of buckwheat cakes with a pitcher of maple syrup contiguous to it!

Love enough, indeed! Love, plus all that ancient art and all that lavish nature can furnish in the line of soul-satisfying beauty, wouldn't be enough for him in such a mood. And if not for him, then assuredly not for you. For it is written that when a woman makes

love her whole life, she doesn't mean her love for a man, but his for her.

Besides, how long is life likely to be? Forty or fifty years of it presumably stretch before you still. And love, in your sense of strained emotion, of demanding passion, of unrest, jealousy, and fret, is not a sufficient or worthy occupation for all those years. Loving may be, but not "love." You probably won't believe it, but it is nevertheless true that to gamble your future on the next year or two of "love" would be just about as sane and wise as to go forth and spend all your capital upon an instant supply of all the cream puffs in the world. Three or four minutes of gratified appetite, an immense and overwhelming *mal de la crème*, and then slow starvation, bitter self-mockery—not a very far-seeing bargain, it is, when you talk in terms of "life"?

No. If you must be a sentimentalist, if you must find love "enough" for your life, let it be a fine, transcendental variety that need cause no upheavals in either your routine or another's. Love as much as you please, with your whole heart and soul—but don't resign from the high school on account of it, or force the board of education to ask for your resignation!



TEMPO AGITATO

FINALLY he kissed me.

I shrank away from him in horror.

I almost slapped him.

I called him a brute to take advantage of my innocence.

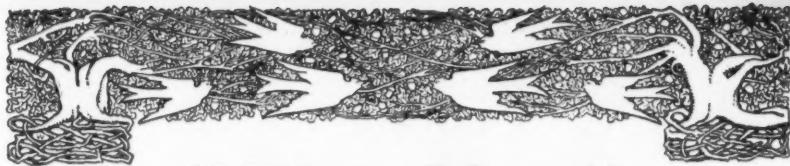
Then I gave way to tears.

It wasn't that I didn't like to be kissed.

But I hoped that if I acted in this way, he would try to kiss me again.

He did.

CARL GLICK.



“The Man”

By Edwina Levin

Author of “Happiness à la Mode,” “He Never Lied to His Wife,” etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARENCE ROWE

Another delicious story by a writer who has become
a favorite with the regular readers of SMITH'S.

THE trouble started with Billy. It was, however, Laura Dixon, Edna's best friend, with her baby-vampire beauty, who led Tom into it. I have always found that when a man gets into trouble of any sort, you can count on it that there's a woman at the bottom of it.

Edna, who is my sister and my guardian, according to father's will, still looks upon me as a mere child. As a matter of fact, I am sixteen past, and a man of considerable discrimination. And so it was as an unwilling member of my brother-in-law's household that I was in a position to watch the intrigue from its inception. I am not a married man, but I have a wide knowledge of the feminine sex.

I might mention just here that Laura is one of those little doll-like creatures with snapping brown eyes, black hair, and red cheeks. She is not my style of woman at all, and never would have figured in our family to the extent she did had it not been for Billy. There was no question in my mind that Tom loved my sister, even if he did admire Laura, for I know, of course, that no one woman can engross a man's entire attention. The male of the species is

broad-minded. Woman is not. Why, when I took Sadie Thompson into an ice-cream parlor recently, I had the most dreadful time trying to explain to— But that's beside the point.

Edna and I being orphans, I feel considerable responsibility concerning her. She is a lovely girl, if I do say so. Tall, with reddish hair and blue eyes, she is just the type that I admire most, although Margie was dark. Margie was the young woman upon whom at that time I had centered my affections. She was a year older than I, but age makes no difference in these cases. It is intellectuality which counts. I am secretly rather proud of my sister, for all that we don't always agree, and I certainly do not approve of some of her ideas.

Why, she started a “hope box,” as I believe they are called, almost immediately after she was married. I shall never forget my feelings when I first came across that box. I am not a curious man, but as I had not seen the thing around before, I naturally wondered about its contents, and what was my horror, on raising the lid, to find a lot of baby things! Try as we may to overcome the bondage of prudery,



"John, you are unbearable!" cried Edna. "Honestly, I feel like taking you across my knee and spanking you this minute!"

there's something peculiarly shocking about the idea of race perpetuation. And it gave me quite a turn to realize that my sister was seriously entertaining such an idea. I might mention that I was two years younger than I am at present. I said nothing, however, but waited for her to broach the subject to me. As the only male member of our family, I naturally looked upon it as my right to be told, but days went by in which she continued persistently to ignore me in the matter.

It was not until one evening months later, when I saw her knitting, that the subject came up. We three were seated in our large, handsome living room.

Clarence Bowers

"What are you knitting, Edna?" I asked, glancing up from my copy of *Swinburne*.

"A sock," she replied, blushing painfully.

"A sock!" I exclaimed, looking at the baby-blue yarn in astonishment. You see, the matter of the hope box had passed from my mind momentarily.

"Surely you don't expect any sane man in the trenches to wear that!" I continued.

"It isn't for a soldier," Edna replied. "What then? Not for Tom!"

"No," she stammered. "It's—for—
Billy."

"Billy?" I repeated.

"Yes—the baby, you know." She
smiled with an assumption of naïveté.

"Oh, yes, certainly," I retorted sarcastically. "Billy, the baby you know." I had of course "tumbled" by this time, as Tom would slangily put it. But I felt that this was not the proper way in which to break the news to me, as head of the family. So I went on relentlessly, "And may I inquire who, what, and where is 'Billy, the baby you know?'"

"John, you can be so hateful!" she replied. "It's for our baby—mine and Tom's." She was in deep embarrassment.

"You hadn't told me," I remarked with that gravity which the situation demanded of an older brother. I am really younger than Edna, but as she has no other brother, naturally I am her older brother, though she *will persist* in calling me her younger brother. I see no reason for this, unless she does it to humiliate me by calling attention to my youth.

"Why, I thought everybody knew I meant to have Billy," she replied, with what I considered a shocking want of delicacy.

"I'm glad, dear," I said, speaking, I flatter myself, without any evidence of embarrassment at the *outré* nature of the subject.

Tom looked up from his paper.

"I am particularly glad," I went on, "because you have always wanted children."

"Yes," she began, "children are—"

"But you must be very careful," I interrupted. "I have a book which I'll lend you on the subject. It tells you everything you should know."

"Why, John!" cried Edna, a look of horror coming into her eyes.

I knew she was going to say some disagreeable thing.

"You must look at beautiful pictures," I went on hastily, "think beautiful thoughts, and—"

"John Brenton!" Edna exclaimed, again trying to interrupt me. "Tom, do you hear this boy?"

But Tom wisely kept out of the discussion by coughing violently behind his paper to avoid hearing her question.

"And above all things, don't get excited or lose your temper," I hurried on, speaking earnestly, however.

"How dare you speak to me like that?" she stormed, showing how useless it is to talk sensibly to a woman.

"Please remember, sister," I said with dignity, "I am grown up, and don't get upset because I can't always be a little boy. Being a man, it is but natural that I should differ from you along certain lines."

Tom had another coughing fit, and rattled his paper violently.

"John, you are unbearable!" cried Edna. "Honestly, I feel like taking you across my knee and spanking you this minute!" Her eyes were snapping fire.

I looked at her with calm tolerance.

"There you go," I said, "getting excited when I was just warning you. Your child will have a dreadful disposition. I suppose it's your hair that makes you have such a frightful temper."

I admit that I said this last a little maliciously. Edna is very sensitive about the color of her hair, and you'd think this would make her more considerate about other people's feelings, but it doesn't. She never misses an opportunity to remind me of my youth. Tom, fearing a row, no doubt, got up and went noisily into his study.

"But how could you name the child Billy?" I asked, before she could get her breath to tell me what she thought of me. "Why, you don't know whether it will be—"

"For goodness sake, John!" exclaimed Edna, her face aflame. "Will you let me speak?"

"Now do be careful, Edna," I broke in. "As I've just informed you, temper is terrible for a coming mother."

"But, John, I'm not a coming mother!" blurted out Edna.

I sat still for a minute, trying to readjust my mind.

"Not a—— You mean you have no *prospects* yet?" I ejaculated. "You're knitting socks and making clothes for a child that——"

"John Brenton!" Edna stormed. "You've been snooping around among my things! Really, it's disgusting! And what's all this nonsense you've been reading? Let me see that book you spoke of!"

I had intended showing it to her, but this was no way to ask me.

I tried to ignore her tirade, but there was no use. She insisted, and rather than have an argument with a woman over an unimportant matter, I got up, went into my den, which adjoins the living room, and got the book.

"Things a Young Mother Ought to Know!" Edna fairly screamed, as I handed her the instructive manual.

Fortunately, just at this dramatic moment, the doorbell rang, and I went to admit Mrs. Dixon. For once, I was really glad to see her.

I think it would be well to state just here that Laura Dixon is one of those butterfly women who organize clubs, takes an active interest in civics, bring estranged couples together, look after their friends, and flirt outrageously with their friends' husbands under their very eyes. She admits it.

"Good gracious!" she cried, shrugging a sable-trimmed seal wrap from her shoulders. "I do believe the child's growing up! How are you, John?"

She raced into the living room, followed by her poor husband, Edward Dixon, who, she says herself, is of no

consequence except to furnish her with money.

"How are you, Edna? And where's Tom? Eddie, for Heaven's sake take my coat! I'm roasting. These new fur dolmans are so heavy they reduce one to a rag. Thank you, Eddie." She turned to me. "We still keep up the civilities, John, though we've been married three years. Edna, my dear, really there's no use in talking to one's husband after the second year. I know every single word Edward has in his mind before he gets it out."

I give her conversation in detail, so you may get an idea of the woman who stirred up so much trouble in our family.

"Sit down, Laura," Edna laughingly urged.

Edna never seemed to see beneath the shallow surface of Laura. I pushed the most comfortable chair in the room toward her, and Edward carefully hung up her coat. Everybody always waits on Laura and gives her the best seat and listens to her with undivided attention.

Tom, who had ostensibly been working with his door closed, now came out. Tom is an architect and works just about night and day. But I noticed that he always had time to stop when Mrs. Dixon came in. Laura rushed at him and gushed over him in that foolish way some men like. I suppose there's something flattering to a big man like Tom in having a pretty-doll type of woman cooing up in his face. I prefer large women, except that they are more difficult to hold on one's knee. Tom looked delighted to see Laura, and Edna again tried to get her to sit down.

"Sit down?" she exclaimed, as if horrified at such a suggestion. "Why, I'm a fright! The wind always whips the powder off my face and makes my nose red. Eddie, you tell Tom about the street car smashing into our new ma-

chine, frightening me almost to death, though it didn't do any damage, just battered up the fender. They claim it was my fault—I was driving—but we will sue. Come on, Edna. I've got to fix my face. Besides, I want to be out of the room while Eddie tells it. The poor man has only six hundred words in his vocabulary—I've counted them—and I simply can't endure to hear them."

This is the way she runs on all the time. I've always disapproved of Laura, because she discusses her husband right before his face. Edna seemed to think nothing of it.

No wife of mine shall so far forget herself as to criticize me in my presence.

The two women went upstairs, leaving us men together. Of course there wasn't anything left for Edward to tell about the accident, so he and Tom and I simply grinned at one another, and they lighted their cigars. Because of a foolish prejudice of Edna's, I don't smoke. I once was addicted to the habit, but one day she caught me with my pipe. We had a dreadful scene, and rather than have a repetition of the unpleasantness, I "cut it out," as Tom would say.

Edward and Tom began discussing business, and as I am artistically inclined, I soon became rather bored and decided to play a game of solitaire. The cards were not in my den, and I recollect that I had taken them up to my room one night when I had been unable to sleep, owing to a ridiculous quarrel with Margie.

As I spread the cards out on the bed and began to get interested, I heard voices. I had no intention of eavesdropping, but being in the next room, of course I couldn't help hearing those two women talk. They were discussing the matter of large families in these days.

I don't approve of large families my-

self. In fact, I had already broached the subject to Margie on one of the days when we had been inspecting Grant's Tomb. When a man and woman love each other, familiar scenes may be viewed over and over, always with a new interest.

I had explained to her that, as I am the only male member of my family, it is necessary that I should have at least one boy, and better two, in case of accident or death to the first. Margie did not reply. I took her silence to mean acquiescence.

"But there may never be a child," Laura was saying from the next room.

"There will be!" cried Edna.

"Lots of folks don't have them," sniffed Laura.

"Because they don't want them," Edna flared.

"They say they do," retorted Laura.

"Talk! Selfish women trying to cover selfishness!"

Then I could hear them going downstairs, and, my game being spoiled, I got up and strolled down also to my den. Laura was talking to Edward in that impatient tone which seems to be characteristic of wives in general, and which shows me that the secret of managing a woman is to take the reins at once.

I sat down in my comfortable morris chair and picked up a book, but reading was out of the question unless I closed my door, a thing I could not do without being rude, so I took out my small pocket mirror and began inspecting a rather nasty cut on my forehead which I had got in a football game. I don't play so often now. It keeps a chap in a rather battered-up state, and women are particular about the appearance of their men.

"If I ever marry again, it's going to be a man, not an echo!" Laura was saying exasperatedly, as I entered the living room a little later. "Edna, you're lucky to have a husband like Tom!"

She turned her eyes on Tom in a way that is really most disturbing to the male.

Laura, glancing in my direction, must have sensed my thought for, with no reason whatever, she brought up an old subject which she delights to rehash upon every available occasion. It is the story of a time long ago when she bought my silence in a certain matter with lollipops. In my youthful days, it seems to have been my custom to tag around after Edna and Laura when they were trying to get beaux. And they claim that I always told everything they said, which may be why they persist in tormenting me now about my age. Laura went into details about those infernal lollipops.

"I used to love to see him with his face all smeared up," she said. "He was so grave about it, and he always made Edna so furious."

"He's just as grave now," said Edna, "and he makes me more furious, with his mannish airs and his advice to me about 'what a young mother ought to know!'"

Laura burst into a perfect gale of laughter. I never was so disgusted in my life.

"Why don't you girls let the boy alone?" asked Tom. "He's not a baby, and a chap of his age doesn't care to be always kept in mind of his baby days. You were babies yourselves once."

This will show you that my brother-in-law is a man of sense. Naturally I was not prepared for his foolish conduct later on.

"Tom, for Heaven's sake don't encourage him!" broke in Edna. "He's unbearable as it is, with his exaggerated notion of his age and importance! Really, you'd think he was as old as Methuselah to hear him talk!"

I rose.

"I am old enough," I said, fixing my sister sternly with my eye, "to be treated with common courtesy and not

humiliated in the presence of our guests. Good night, Laura. Good night, Edward." And I repaired to my den and closed the door.

After that I heard a good deal of Billy. Tom and Edna discussed him humorously, but always with a serious undercurrent. It was as clear to me as it was incomprehensible that they both wanted him. As time went on, I grew resigned to the idea of a squalling brat around.

I had passed my sophomore and junior years when I began to notice that the talk about Billy had dropped off. Then, just as I was entering my senior year, an amazing incident occurred. We were sitting at the breakfast table, and I was musing over one of Billy Bradley's smart sayings. Billy is the four-year-old brother of Lillian, the young woman with whom I am now in love. Being a slender man, Margie's size had eventually got on my nerves. She was short and weighed a hundred and sixty pounds; also, she continued to grow stouter, so that at times I was almost paralyzed when she would sit on my knee. I broke with her gradually. This time it is the genuine article. Lillian is tall, but slim like myself. A man's taste changes as he grows older. I now see why there are so many unhappy married men.

"Really," I said, jocularly breaking one of the many silences that seemed to fall on our family group of late, "Billy is a marvelous youngster. What do you suppose he said last evening? Lillian and I were——"

Without warning, Edna burst into tears and left the table. I was never more astonished in my life.

Orange spoon in mid-air, I stared at Tom, who sat still, as if he had been struck a stunning blow.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"John," he said gravely, "I'm afraid, old man, there's never going to be any Billy in our house."



She kept close to the pink light, knowing how lovely it made her baby-vampirish face.

I dropped my spoon and sat back, completely dashed. I had not thought of such a thing. In fact, it had never occurred to me that persons desiring children might not have them.

Tom followed Edna upstairs, and I continued my breakfast in a most thoughtful mood.

After that I was careful not to refer to Billy Bradley again. Then it was

that I began to notice a sort of hunted look in Edna's eyes, such as I had seen in Lillian's on the day that I bought a box of candy for Margie; Lillian had unfortunately dropped in while I was buying it. Womanlike, she put a wrong construction on the affair, and I had to let her wear my signet ring to make things up.

Edna began to grow thin, and being

already slender, she couldn't stand it. Her eyes got too big for her small, pointed face. And her chief charm, which was her vivacity, left her entirely. She lost interest in her pretty dresses and would sit of evenings, or at table, dreaming, instead of trying to entertain Tom, which, you must know, was the worst possible tactics to pursue.

It was at this point that the thing began, and I, for one, was not surprised. I might mention that it was after I had seen Margie in tears, whereby she had acquired a red nose and eyes, that there had come a turning point in my own life. If women could only realize the importance of always being bright and amusing and pretty around a man!

I was not prepared, however, for the succession of events that followed. I was in my den one day* when I heard a sibilant whispering. I went to close the living-room door. It was Tom and Laura. They started guiltily.

Soon after this, Laura announced in a most callous way that she was divorcing Edward. He had asked for it, and though she would get good alimony, she must look around for number two.

"I must have a worshiper," she said to Edna, who was lounging listlessly on a chaise longue. Since Billy's demise—it amounted to that—her hands were always idle. "I wish I could get hold of a real man like Tom," Laura continued.

I gazed pityingly at Edna. The masculine mind requires brightness, laughter, and song to rest him from the large part he must play in life. Laura was all of these rolled into one dazzling bit of femininity. I might mention that I am beginning to admire small women. There is a new girl in our class, a petite brunette, who is very attractive to me.

After Laura left, I decided to speak to Edna about her changed appearance and to hint at the direful consequences. I could not rid myself of the memory

of Tom and Laura whispering together, and their start at sight of me.

"It is the tragedy of the sex, sister," I began meaningly, "that women cave in under trouble and in consequence lose that affection which is rightfully theirs."

"John darling," interrupted Edna, "you're the dearest boy on earth, and you mean well, but nobody ever knows what you're talking about. I doubt if you do yourself."

Naturally there was nothing more to be said.

The next morning, Edna was listless as usual. She was very white, with deep rings around her eyes. I saw Tom's look of dissatisfaction. He was wretched and distract. I got through my breakfast hurriedly and went into the living room and sat down in a deep window seat behind the heavy silk portières, to meditate.

It being Saturday, there was no school. I picked up my geometry, which I had left there the evening before, and started to finish up my home work. Then I fell to speculating on whether to devote the afternoon to baseball or to take Edna for a drive. I felt that she needed the air. Presently I heard Tom come in from the breakfast room and call for a number on the phone.

It was Mrs. Dixon's number.

"That you, Laura?" He spoke scarcely above a whisper. "No, it's all right. In the breakfast room. She's getting worse, if anything. Heard anything about— I don't think I can stand it much longer. When? This morning? Yes, around the corner. All right, I'm leaving now."

Tom hung up the receiver and hurried out. I sat there stunned.

Tom's and Edna's best friend!

I went to the front window. The car was waiting in front of our door, and he drove away. Presently Laura Dixon, who lives across the street from

us, came out of her house and went in the direction Tom had taken.

I grabbed my cap and followed at a safe distance, darting into a convenient doorway as she turned the corner. I peeped out; then I followed again. Sure enough, Tom's car was waiting. She climbed in and they drove away, laughing joyously.

I recalled Tom's gloomy face at breakfast.

My first inclination was to shoot my brother-in-law on the spot, but I had no gun. So I went back home and sought my sister. She must know the truth at once, if she were to stop it.

I found her still moping over her coffee.

"Sister dear," I said gravely, "come into the living room. I—I have something to tell you."

"John!" she fairly screamed at me, and jumped up from the table, her hand flying to her bosom. "It is about—Tom?"

I nodded. She went white. I felt that she already suspected the truth. Her next words undid me.

"Is he killed?" she gasped.

"No, not that, dear," I replied, taking one of her hands and leading her gently toward the living room. She stopped and flung her arms around my neck.

"He's hurt!" she said in a sort of gasping sob. "I know he is! John darling, tell me the worst at once! I can bear anything but suspense!"

"Tom is not hurt, Edna," I said. "In fact, I just saw him driving toward Amsterdam Avenue, and he was perfectly well, laughing and talking with a joyousness such as I have not observed in him for weeks."

"Then what on earth is the matter?" she said, infinite relief leaping into her eyes.

"Come into the living room," I insisted.

She followed me uncertainly. I led her to a big couch and waited for her

to sit. When she did so, I sat down beside her and took one of her hands tenderly in mine.

That look of fright came back into her eyes.

"John Brenton!" she exclaimed. "You aren't married!"

She said it as if that were the next worst thing that could happen beside Tom's death.

"No," I returned gravely. "It's about Tom."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, what is it?" She was fairly quivering now with nervousness and dread.

"Edna," I said, "it's the old story of the triangle."

"John, you—"

"Don't get excited," I continued. "It's a matter that I believe can be rectified, if taken in hand at once."

"John," she pleaded, "please tell me! What is it?"

"A woman," I returned briefly.

"A what?"

"A woman," I repeated. "Tom is having an affair with a woman."

I pass over the scene that followed. Suffice it to say, Edna was furious—not at Tom, but at me!

I had no chance to defend myself. She overwhelmed me with words. I left her. Taking a long walk, I considered what was best to do. I thought of appealing to Laura, but at once cast the idea aside. My next thought was of talking it out with Tom. Finally I decided to wait for the situation to develop. Then I would do what I could to help my sister.

It developed faster than I could have expected.

Returning at noon time, I strolled into Edna's room and spoke casually. I always do this to pass over any remnant of unpleasantness. She was all over her anger at me and patted my cheek in her way of "little boying" me. She was dressed to meet Tom downtown for lunch. Just as she put on her

hat, he called up to say that "an important engagement with a man" would prevent his meeting her. I felt that this hit my sister, because Tom was not in the habit of disappointing her.

Perhaps what I had said had made some impression on her. Anyway, without moving from the phone, she picked up the receiver and called Laura, which surprised me, as I had not mentioned the name of the woman with whom her husband was having a liaison.

At first she could not get Mrs. Dixon to the phone. She had to tell the maid what she wanted; then Laura came, and sis invited her to lunch at Delmonico's. There was a long silence, during which I knew that Laura was making elaborate excuses. Finally Edna hung up the receiver.

"Is she going?" I asked imperturbably.

"No, she's taking lunch with a girl friend."

"What girl friend?" I demanded meaningfully.

"I don't know," she replied. "She didn't say."

"It isn't like *Laura* not to say."

Edna stared at me. I made a sweeping gesture with both arms.

"Now you know the truth," I muttered.

"John, you aren't well," she said, that look of alarm again coming into her eyes.

"Where do you suppose they've gone?" I demanded.

"Who?"

"Your husband and your friend!" I retorted. "I saw them drive away together; I have seen them whispering together; I heard Tom phone her secretly— Oh, I've been half mad with the burden of your troubles!" I flung my arms over my head in a wild attempt to relieve my overwrought feelings. "I've known of their out-

rageous affair for some time," I went on. "I kept silent, hoping I was wrong. I am not narrow-minded, but when I see my sister—my only sister, who is dearer to me than life—when I see her mocked and deceived, it is beyond human endurance! God!"

I sank down on a chair and buried my aching brow in my hands.

"John!" gasped Edna, but she did not storm at me as she had done that morning.

Suspicion is like a mushroom, born and full grown overnight. I invented this *jeu d'esprit*, though Tom once said that I must have read it somewhere.

"Poor little Johnnie!" said my sister chokingly.

I rose.

"Come with me," I said tersely. But she made excuse that she would better phone the dressmaker to come out while she had some spare time.

I did not reply, but without further ado went out to my own personal car, which was standing at the door. You see, I have to have a car on account of Lillian. She wouldn't go with a chap who didn't own his own car. I had an awful time making sis realize the importance of this matter, and she being my guardian, I could not have got it without her consent.

I took hold of the wheel. I did not know at the moment where I was going, but there is to a man a thrilling exhilaration in the simple act of faring forth in defense of the women of his house.

I turned into Central Park West and threaded my car through Fifth Avenue. Nearing the Thirties, I saw Lillian and her chum—a tall, silly blonde who wore an obnoxious red sweater—up the street trying frantically to signal me. But I had no time to dawdle with the fair sex; I was busy about family matters, and pretended not to see her.

Suddenly it came to me—the Wistaria, a quiet, but expensive little café, all shady nooks, but eminently respect-



"What's the matter? John sick?" came a voice from the door.

able. I have several times taken the new girl in our class there of afternoons for tea. I am told that it is there that young lovers and old run away from prying eyes. I have even heard it whispered that it is there that other women's husbands bring other men's wives for quiet little chats. A man of the world learns these things.

Stopping my car, I made my way inside to a far corner in deep shadow. It was a beautiful room, with soft wis-

taria hangings and just the right amount of green and brown to give the impression of a brown wood arbor, green foliage, and wistaria blossoms. I don't know how the effect was obtained, but one always has a feeling of being outdoors in there, yet hidden, as in a conservatory. There were palms and ferns, birds twittering, and a waterfall splashing over what appeared to be real rocks. Also, there was a gentle, balmy breeze, winter and summer, which re-

minded me of the South. The only note of bright color was the pale pink of the carnation shades on the tables, which simulated delicate bouquets and lighted the faces of the women.

All at once I felt my own face go ghastly. Without turning my head, I saw Tom making his way to a shadowy place, and following him was—*the man!* Laura! In a new dress which she had worn over to show only the day before, saying it was to give her assurance in an assault she was making on a dreadful man person with loads of money! At the same time, she had given Edna a lecture about not "perking up," as she called it.

"Better look out, Edna," she had said. "While you're mooning around about a mythical Billy, some handsome divorcee will grab Tom. He's rich and good looking, and there aren't enough men to go around, since the war. It behoves a wife to look to her laurels."

Edna had laughingly said that she was not afraid.

As I sat there watching that woman using her every art to fascinate my sister's husband, I wondered at her having said such a thing to Edna. It seemed so positively brazen.

I sat straight up in my chair, one hand clutching the slender stem of a water goblet. Everywhere women were laughing into men's faces, in an effort to please. I took in the delicate beauty of the place as in striking contrast to the tragedy which was being enacted there. I suppose it is ever thus in life—the sun shines, the flowers bloom, and the birds sing, while a soul struggles in its death throes.

Laura bent toward Tom from time to time, and even across the distance I could see that she was talking earnestly to him. Her expression was not difficult to watch, because she kept close to the pink light, knowing how lovely it made her baby-vampirish face. Then her tinkling laugh would strike across

the room, never loud, but distinct from all others.

Presently they rose and passed out. I started home.

I would have left my brother-in-law's house and gone to a distant relative, but the thought of leaving my sister there with him restrained me. So I went into my den and tried to do my Monday's lessons. It was impossible to fix my attention on geometric problems when in my own home was a human problem of suffering and disaster. God, how I hated women! All women but my sister. What trouble they bring into the life of man!

I decided to go for a walk in the Metropolitan Museum, that being my favorite haunt when I want to think. I met Lillian and her chum coming out of Pernib's tomb. Those two girls are always snooping around those old Egyptian exhibits. In spite of my perturbation, my heart fluttered strangely. It is curious the effect that girl has on me. There can be no doubt that I love her. My affair with the new girl in our class was nothing serious of course—just a pleasant little adventure.

Lillian ignored me. "Harry," Lillian's blond chum in the atrocious sweater, was very civil. But with the troubles of one woman on my shoulders, I was in no mood to embroil myself with another.

"John has on a new suit," remarked the blonde. "Look at him, Lilly. Isn't he spiffy?"

I had entirely forgotten my new suit, though I had put it on that morning in full consciousness of its becomingness. I saw Lillian's eyes light with pleasure, but she looked away.

"Miss Bradley clearly doesn't care for my society," I said haughtily. "I bid you good day, Miss Morgan." This was Harry's name.

Lillian turned on this.

"You saw me!" she stormed, and I lied like a gentleman.

"I was going for a doctor," I said.
She sniffed.

"In the Wistaria?"

I had supposed she was far enough away to be uncertain, as there were offices next door, but I stuck to my guns.

"Lillian, do you dare to insult me by insinuating that I would—do you think I would be guilty of telling an untruth?" I asked sternly.

"I know you would, John!" she retorted. "You saw me, and that's all there is to it, and you weren't going for any doctor. Now don't talk back or I'll never speak to you again!"

Not caring to argue with a woman, I refrained from making any reply, and took the two of them out and bought ice cream. I find that the best way to get an angry woman in a good humor is to buy her something.

After taking them home, I went back to dinner, very much perturbed in mind. I thought it not unlikely that I might have to kill Tom before the evening was over. I was amazed to meet Edna. She was charmingly dressed in a soft green frock with a corsage of sweet peas. Beyond the fact that she talked more rapidly than usual, her eyes snapped, and her cheeks held a faint color, she showed no sign of the shock I had perforce given her only a few hours before. I admit I was nonplussed. It is difficult to understand all the ramifications of a woman's mind, but I felt sure she had something up her sleeve.

"You're like a girl to-night, Edna," said Tom. "You've grown so thin of late, and so changed."

He made no mention of his broken engagement, and she forebore to question him.

Edna wanted to meet him a couple of days later, but he said he was lurching with the same man he had lunched with on Saturday!

I felt that I ought to have an explan-

ation from Tom Warrick, but how to broach the subject was a question, under the circumstances. He was gentle, obtrusively affectionate, but it looked forced and unreal. Edna, on her side, was so determined to please him, so pathetically responsive, that it wrung my heart to watch her. I even lost interest in Lillian in those days. Nor did it affect me particularly when she began to flirt with George Bixby, my old rival for Margie.

I learned then that the love of family is greater than the love of the sexes. Even such absorbing love as I had given Lillian—a love that had filled my whole being—became a sickly thing. And I learned to hate my brother-in-law as I had never dreamed one could hate anybody.

Then the climax came. Tom called up at four o'clock to say that he was going out of town. He was leaving on the seven-o'clock train for Bolan. She was out, and I took the message. The thing that made me know the truth was that when I said we'd come down and see him off, he told me not to—that he might leave earlier or later.

Instantly I called Laura on the phone.

"Ask Mrs. Dixon to come to the phone," I said sternly when the maid answered.

"Madam has gone to the station," said the maid. "She is leaving on the five-o'clock train."

"Where to?" I asked chokingly.
"Bolan."

For a moment I could not speak.

"I thought she was going on the seven o'clock," I said.

"She was to, but she got a phone call and went earlier," replied the maid.

I hung up the receiver. They were going away together! I must stop them.

I looked at my wrist watch. I had forty-five minutes. My machine was at the door. I fairly ran out of the

house, and I was soon passing car after car on the Drive. They must not take that train together; I knew that. Somebody would see them; it would get out. Such things always did get out.

I made excellent time until we turned into Cathedral Parkway. On Fifth Avenue traffic regulations retarded my progress. At Columbus Circle, I got into a jam and was held up for six minutes. In and out among two long lines of cars and motor buses I crept, crawling past one here, another there. Finally I turned at Forty-second Street toward Madison. Six minutes were left. It seemed impossible that we could make it! And yet—something might happen. It did. I killed my engine, and a tire went flat as I got started again. Hailing a taxi, I deserted the car and arrived at Grand Central four minutes after the five-o'clock train had pulled out.

The gateman recollected having seen a big man in a gray suit and a little dark woman pass through. What made him remember them was that the woman talked every minute and was "as pretty as a pink."

After phoning the garage man to come and get my car, I went home and up to my room.

The gong sounded for dinner. After a while, a maid came to tell me. I told her I had eaten downtown. This was the first time in my life that I can remember not feeling hungry at meal-time. I have slept badly upon occasions, when the woman I loved has been unusually unreasonable, but I could always eat.

In my mind's eyes I saw my sister as the Lady of Shalott, staring into the mirror of her broken hopes.

She came up after dinner to have a little chat with me, and insisted that I was not well. She petted me and little-boyed me, and for the first time in years, I did not resent it. I went over

to my window, and she came and stood beside me. I put my arm around her and she laid her dear head against mine. We are exactly of a height.

"Poor little John!" she whispered, thinking of me. She knew that I was suffering. "Won't you tell sister what it is?"

"Oh, sis," I cried, almost breaking down, "I hate women! All women but you!"

"Dear little boy," she whispered, and I saw tears in her eyes, "it hurts just as bad, I know, as if you were grown up—maybe worse."

She evidently thought I was having trouble with Lillian. Though Edna disapproved of my affairs, of course she was always sympathetic with me when I was suffering from the unreasonableness of her sex.

"Oh, sister!" I ejaculated, flinging both my arms around her. "You are all I have! Sex love is as nothing to the love of family. I've learned that. I am through with women! From now on I shall devote my life to your happiness!"

"Poor little boy!" she whispered into my ear. "Come tell sister all about it."

With one arm still around me, she led me to the chaise longue. As she sat down, I fell upon my knees before her. The time had come when I, who loved her, must thrust the knife into her dear, unsuspecting heart. Not in veiled words, but with blunt brutality, must I unfold the nefarious affair. She evidently saw the truth in my tragic face, for her own went white. The tender look passed, and fear took its place.

"Why, John!" she cried. "It is something serious!"

"Oh, my God, yes!"

I couldn't tell her! I must! I opened my mouth to speak, choked, then started to bawling and put my head in her lap.

"What's the matter? John sick?" came a voice from the door.

I scrambled up. There stood Tom and Laura—together!

Also, there was another weird creature with them. It was in Tom's arms. I stared stupidly. In an illuminating flash, I knew the truth! Tom was grinning from ear to ear.

"A birthday surprise for you," he said. That butterfly Laura had tears in her eyes.

Edna had risen as I had. She evidently understood, too, for she began laughing and crying. Tom reached out one arm, and she flung herself onto his breast.

Laura laughed.

"Well, Heaven knows I'm glad everything's satisfactory! And now I do hope, Edna, you'll perk up and get your looks back before some divorcee snatches Tom away from you. You deserve to lose him."

Neither Tom nor Edna paid any attention to her, and I was too dashed to speak.

"They've forgotten my existence," Laura said forlornly. She turned to me. "John, I swear off. Hereafter I'm going to let other folks tend to their own business."

She left like a whirlwind, pretending to be very angry. They never even noticed that she was going. As for me, I was too flabbergasted even to think of accompanying her to the door. For several moments I stared at the

absurd picture of my brother-in-law and his wife. Then, finding myself a person of no importance in the room, I went out.

Suddenly it occurred to me that I was very hungry, and I hurried down to my dinner, thereby making the maids furious. I'm afraid I ate ravenously for a few minutes. Meanwhile, I reviewed my tragic sufferings of these past days and the astounding climax which this morning had brought.

As I strolled back into the living room, a curious thought came to me. It was this:

Trouble seems to fill the stomach, to render even the thought of food nauseating. I believe this to be a wise provision of nature for those persons who are unable to provide themselves with food.

At this juncture in my musings, a hideous, ear-splitting sound came from above. I sat up in horror. It was drawing nearer—becoming more intolerable each moment. I waited in silent agony. Tom entered first, a grinning jackal, followed by Edna, who—I must say it even of my own sister—looked entirely asinine as she sat down in a large chair, holding in her arms a homely, red-headed infant.

"There, there, Billy boy, muvver's here," Edna remarked brilliantly.

"Billy boy" kept right on howling. I got out.



ONE WHO DRINKS OF LETHE

I AM somewhat disappointed in Fred.

He is inclined to be neglectful of trifles.

I told him to meet me at two o'clock at the second column from the left in the Egyptian Room at the Plaza.

I wore my daintiest gown, the corsage of orchids that he had sent me, and my new hat.

I was at the Plaza exactly five minutes before two. Fred was there—at the second column from the left, just as I had told him.

But he is so forgetful of trifles.

He had brought his wife with him.

CARL GLICK.

The Thin Wall

By Thomas Edgelow

Author of "Dementis & Co.," "Love, the Conqueror," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

A "different" story of compelling interest.

LOUNGING in his club window, Christopher Loring gazed out on the Fifth Avenue traffic. Lounging in a club window suggests boredom, but Loring was far from being bored. True, he was rich and very idle. True, he generally found favor in the eyes of women, and had never experienced a greater anxiety in life than that Mrs. Prendergast had once marked him out as the future husband of her eldest daughter—a situation from which he had extricated himself with more indiscretion than valor.

Still, with all the appurtenances of wealth and social position, Christopher Loring was far from being bored with life. For Loring was in love, and you know perfectly well that when you are very much in love, boredom is unthinkable. Simply, boredom is not.

Everything mattered so tremendously to Loring. It was a matter of the greatest importance whether Lucille Farr experienced a headache; it was a matter of still greater importance if she was in one of her moods. To be in one of her moods meant that Lucille Farr would frighten Loring half out of his senses by suggesting that perhaps, after all, she had better not marry him. Art was art, and though, most fortunately for Lucille, she did not have to depend for her living upon her rather mediocre water colors, she took herself and her work very seriously indeed.

So, in the pleasurable agonies of

those first engagement days, Christopher Loring was intensely alive. He loved so desperately underneath his well-bred calm. Life was so wonderful, now that life included Lucille. Loring had always imagined, in his younger days—for Loring was thirty-five—that intense emotion, tremendous, almost upsetting love was an experience peculiar to the masses. That view had gone upon meeting and loving Lucille.

Other views, also, had disappeared—such as a slightly contemptuous attitude toward people whose bank accounts were more imposing than their pedigrees. For Lucille sprang almost directly from the masses, as her father had accumulated a moderate fortune as the proprietor of a large Mid-Western hotel.

Farther back from the club window, Travis, the club philosopher, was chatting with Burton, the club cynic. Loring lent an idle ear to what they were saying. But suddenly he became interested and threw himself into a chair beside Travis.

"You can sneer as much as you like, Burton," Travis was saying, "but I stick to my guns. The wall is very thin."

"So is your argument," Burton retorted.

Travis did not heed the interruption.

"The wall is very thin," he repeated. "How little difference there is between the letter 'P' and the letter 'B'! In 'P' we have pathos—with 'B', bathos, and

so pathos becomes laughable—it becomes humor, and there is just as thin a wall between laughter and tears."

"Most of the shows on Broadway—" Burton began, but Travis would not be interrupted. He was

"Quite—oh, quite," Burton murmured softly. "The opera is a splendid example. There must be some people, I suppose, who find pleasure in it."

Loring lit a cigarette. He said nothing, but his mind traveled ahead.



He had hated the exquisite girl who stood by the window.

riding his favorite hobby-horse and he moved smoothly on.

"Take heat and cold. Great heat and great cold will produce similar scars. Take pain and pleasure. The doctors will tell you that there isn't a great difference between them."

"Then we have life and death," Travis went on genially. "The wall between, they say, is very—"

"Please!" Burton begged. "Please not that! From all mysticism, occultism, previous incarnations, and the astral plane, good Lord deliver me!"

Travis laughed.

"All right, then—anything to please you—take love and hate."

"Love and hate!" repeated Loring thoughtfully. "You mean—Now, what exactly do you mean, Travis?"

"It's obvious enough," Travis replied, enjoying the rôle of instructor. "Obvious enough. There's very little difference, surely, between love and hate. Ask any psychologist. Search your own experiences. When I was a young fellow—younger than either of you two—there was an actress—"

"There always is," sighed Burton.

And, Lord, how I loved that woman! Yet—and you must remember I was only a boy—there were times when I hated her. I would give a million dollars to be able to feel to-day one half such emotion." Travis somewhat ruefully stroked his bald head. "Of course love and hate are next door to each other. There were times when I hated that girl—detested her—loathed her! Most of the time I adored the ground she walked on. There are thousands of cases where a man has suddenly turned against the woman he loves."

"There was McNaughton," Burton said, but Loring heard no more. Soon he got up and moved out of the room.

It was curious that Travis should have brought up that subject. Loring had hardly dared to admit it to himself, but at times he had experienced this very duplicity of feeling toward Lucille.

A week before, he had been in Lucille's studio, which overlooked Sheridan Square. He had been sitting beside her on a low divan, and suddenly it had seemed to him that he must find words—that he must break through his usual reticence—that he must make this beautiful creature realize in part what she meant to him. He had found himself suddenly speaking, and although at first the words had come haltingly,

soon he had been speaking rapidly, eloquently, passionately, of how he loved her.

And then Lucille had risen from the couch. She had walked across the studio and had stood by the great north window. It was as if the big window had formed a frame for her slender beauty. Her hair, in its golden splendor, had been a halo above the oval of her face.

Suddenly, for a brief moment, Loring had experienced a revulsion of feeling. For that passing fragment of time, Loring had known hate. He had hated the exquisite girl who stood by the window. It had all been over in a second, and he had started up and had followed Lucille to the window—now hating himself. He had overwhelmed her with his protestations of love.

But this feeling had returned at odd moments, and Loring had somewhat egotistically imagined that he was the only man who had ever experienced a similar emotion.

And now Travis had coolly announced that such experiences were common enough!

Loring glanced at his watch. It was just after two. Lucille had told him over the telephone that morning that she would be in her studio all the afternoon and early evening. Loring might call for her about seven and take her to dinner.

Loring felt that he could not wait until seven o'clock. He must see her before. Lucille might not like being interrupted, but the light would fail by four o'clock. He would walk down Fifth Avenue. There was a pendant that Lucille had admired. He was possessed with a desire to present it to her.

Prosperous, happy, well-turned-out, Loring sauntered down the Avenue. At Thirty-seventh Street, he entered the doors of a world-famous jeweler. A sauve attendant produced the pendant for his inspection, and evidence was



Reverently he knelt and kissed the royal hands extended to him.

given as to Loring's wealth from the fact that he placed the jeweler's case in his pocket without any vulgar transaction connected with cash. Some one opened the door, and Loring, smiling, passed out onto the street.

He proceeded on his way downtown for about a block, when three things happened simultaneously. Three of Loring's senses were assailed at the same moment.

Sight: Loring became acutely aware that a large tricolor was floating from above the doors of a big department store—the emblem of France.

Hearing: on Thirty-fourth Street, on their way west, a company of home-coming troops was marching, and the hoarse shouts of the multitude were borne toward Loring.

Smell: a woman, crossing the wide pavement from her limousine, passed directly in front of Loring and entered a smart modiste's, while the heavy per-

fume that she exhaled arose and enveloped Loring in its fragrance.

For a moment—nothingness. Then Loring seemed conscious of only three things—the waving flag of the French republic, the shouting of the crowd, the exquisite sweetness of that heavy perfume. And then, again, for another moment—nothingness.

At the private entrance of the Tuileries, the young Marquis de Lomeine presented his "ticket of entry," for Louis Seize, who still had the power to give orders—within the Tuileries—had commanded that none be admitted without such credentials. Immediately, Christophe, Marquis de Lomeine, was allowed to pass, although the hour was late.

In the apartments above, Marie Antoinette was pleading with her liege. If only Louis would awaken to his danger! And yet he would procrasti-

nate. Still, there was plenty of time. Gustav of Sweden had, by the old laws of chivalry, sworn himself the very gallant knight of Marie Antoinette, and had he not proven his good intentions by sending Count Fersen to help in their—well, in their escape?

Louis disliked the word "escape." But his subjects nearer the frontier were, he was bound to admit, more loyal than those of the City of Paris, in that unlucky year of 1791. And De Bouillé, most loyal of generals, was waiting at his fortified camp at Mont-médi with forces of equally loyal German-French troops. Colonel the Duc de Choiseul, was continually passing and repassing between the Tuileries and Metz with letters.

"Then surely, sire, you must recognize that now is the time?"

But Louis flung away from her. He paced up and down the salon. Anything but decision—anything so long as he was not called upon to act.

The queen, however—and she was yet the queen—was insistent. She had even made her own preparations in advance. Naturally, and of course, royalty could not travel like other people. That demanded preparation. Things—vaguely, things—must be sent in advance.

A servant announced the Marquis de Lomeine.

He came in, a graceful enough figure. Reverently he knelt and kissed the royal hands extended to him.

"My good De Lomeine! What news?" It was Louis who spoke.

"Her majesty honored me by sending word," explained Christophe. "I trust that my services may be needed?"

He arose and glanced anxiously at Marie Antoinette.

The queen laughed lightly, and it was rarely enough that she laughed in those days.

"A caprice, *cher marquis*," she smiled at him. "You know of his

majesty's intentions. De Bouillé waits."

But Louis seemed to have no intentions. Nervously he played with his rings.

"We make preparations," the queen went on. "I would ask your good offices, marquis."

He bowed and stood in an attitude of one who but listens to obey.

The difficulty lay in the *nécessaire* of madame. And the *nécessaire* was rightly named, for it was absolutely necessary in the service of beauty. Made of exquisitely tooled rosewood and inlaid cunningly with ivory, the small cabinet contained all those powders, pigments, and perfumes that helped in the toilet of Marie Antoinette. Obviously, then, the *nécessaire* must be sent ahead. Of course, the marquis would realize the necessity of absolute secrecy, but could he not contrive some means to forward the *nécessaire* of majesty?

The marquis would guard such charming caprice if needs be with his very life. Again he knelt and kissed the small hand so graciously extended to him.

"We shall not forget in happier days—should happier days arrive," Marie Antoinette assured him.

Later—the next day—when the royal *nécessaire* reposed in the apartments of the Marquis de Lomeine, with his own hands he prepared to pack it. The open doors of the *nécessaire* emitted the heavy perfume affected by majesty.

Suddenly the young marquis was aware that he was not alone in his salon. A woman—rather, a girl—stood by the velvet portières. Quickly, the marquis flung a cloak that happened to be lying on a chair over the *nécessaire*, but not before the girl had espied and noticed the royal monogram and the fleur-de-lis of France.

"What do you want here, Lucette? How did you get in?" Christophe asked quickly.

She did not answer him, but came forward slowly with her arms extended. She was poorly dressed, this girl, in the clothing of the bourgeoisie. She did not speak, but stood facing him, while about her was a strange dignity, and yet a dignity that pleaded.

Then her self-possession left her. In passionate abandon, she flung herself on her knees before him. She clasped his hands and would not let them go.

"Christophe, Christophe!" she cried.

The Marquis de Lomeine looked uncomfortable. That was the worst of the people. They were so emotional.

"Come, Lucette! Control yourself," he said kindly. "I told you before that I couldn't see you again."

But still she cried. Then her voice sunk to a low moan: "Christophe, Christophe!"

Finally he disengaged himself from her grasp, and stood aside, a little coldly. He crossed his arms and looked down at her where she still knelt.

"But this is foolish, my little one."

She rose and faced him.

"Christophe, you promised! You know you promised!" She drew her cloak about her. "It is not too late!"

He frowned at this. The girl was impossible. Then, going to a cabinet, he pulled out a drawer. From it he took some gold, which he offered to her.

Indignantly she waved it aside, and then the passion that was surging within her found words, albeit few enough of them. It was more in their intensity that she betrayed the surging emotion that went on within her.

"Christophe—you promised—you gave me your word to marry me! I will not be denied! Oh, it is not just! You promised to marry me!"

But the foolish Lucette! In those days, the line was a thin one that divided the bourgeoisie from sans-culottism. The idea was unthinkable—that a marquis of France could marry

one of the people, be she ever so charming. Besides, De Lomeine had long ago tired. There was nothing extraordinary in it. What were the people for? Why did they have attractive daughters? And why all this tragedy? De Lomeine shrugged expressive shoulders as he touched lightly, but gently and almost kindly, on all these points.

And presently Lucette went, sobbing noisily and vulgarly—as is the way with the common people—out of the apartment of Christophe, Marquis de Lomeine.

Nor did the marquis give her many thoughts. Instead, he made preparations for the royal *nécessaire* to be forwarded by carriers—at a cost of five hundred louis. It was a pity that the *nécessaire* never reached its destination. It was a still greater pity that a discovered Louis was brought back on Saturday the twenty-fifth of June, 1791. The flight toward the succor extended by De Bouillé had been too slow. Louis, with Marie Antoinette by his side, had traveled too conspicuously. Still, can royalty travel like others?

In the time that followed, during the ghastly reign of terror that swept all before it, the Marquis de Lomeine had still more things to occupy his mind than the troubles of Lucette.

Soon he was in flight—to be drawn back by the fatal lure of Paris, by the wish to be of use to the queen he loved so well.

Came the dread January morning—that black Monday in 1793—when the crowd hummed expectantly around the guillotine. Horror-stricken, disguised, and afraid, the Marquis de Lomeine stood in that crowd among the canaille. Dread, ghastly moment when Samson, the executioner, held up to the gaze of the multitude the head—the dreadful head—of Louis Capet, once Louis Seize of France!

And it was in that crowd that rude



In a stream of passionate rhetoric, she claimed her victim.

hands seized the person of the Marquis de Lomeine and bore him to one of the twelve Houses of Arrest.

Came the agony of delay, and at last Christophe faced that grim tribunal. Still, all was not lost. By the favor of Heaven, Robespierre was in a good humor that morning. It seemed almost as if he would let Christophe go. He did at times release an aristocrat, if only to raise hopes in other noble hearts that were destined to be dashed to the ground.

The Marquis de Lomeine drew a long breath. The incredible was about to happen. He would be released, and life is sweet at twenty-seven, however much one's world may have tumbled about one.

Then from the back of the courtroom rushed a woman. Lucette! Now were her words many. No longer did she hesitate, but in one almost unpunctuated stream of passionate rhetoric,

she claimed her victim. Her concluding argument, had one been needed, was invincible.

"And this cursed aristocrat—this Christophe dog," she screamed at Robespierre, "was the one employed by Marie Antoinette to send her toilet *nécessaire*—filled with her powders and her perfumes—away! While we—we citizens of France—were without bread, that woman could not travel without perfume! Citizens, I who have suffered, demand this man for Madame la Guillotine!"

So, in less than twenty-four hours, Christophe, Marquis de Lomeine, after his rough ride in the tumbril through the streets of scoffing faces, outwardly proud and cold as ever, rather gallantly mounted the steps of the scaffold. Samson and his assistants laid eager hands upon him. They placed him on the plank, and just before the knife fell, one face seemed to stand out from

among the others of that mocking crowd—the face of Lucette, the beautiful face of Lucette. Now it was as if a storm of conflicting emotions were striving for expression. She was loving him, with the love that only despairing womanhood can know. She was hating him—gloating—mocking him. So the last thought of the Marquis de Lomeine was tinged both with hatred and with love.

Then the knife fell, and the head of the marquis rolled into the basket.

But was this death? Was this—this sense of *being* to die? Then—oh, triumphantly then—there was no death! And if there was no death—except for this sensation of lightness—why, then, the Marquis de Lomeine could have revenge! How sweet was revenge! Never before had Christophe desired anything as he desired revenge. The knife—the knife of the guillotine had ended his career as Marquis de Lomeine; so the knife, although not of the guillotine, should bring him his revenge. It was intoxicating, this thought. The pleasure would be exquisite. As there was no death, yet could he drive home a knife into the treacherous heart of Lucette.

But the jeering crowd had disappeared. There were people about, but not that vast cluster of human bodies that hung about the guillotine. No matter—Christophe knew where she lived. He would follow to her garret. He must pass down the Avenue Henri Martin. Strange, but this did not altogether resemble the Avenue Henri Martin. No matter. The passage from life to what men knew as death—which was no death—had perhaps affected his senses.

Christophe passed rapidly on. Already in his thoughts that sweet moment had arrived when he would settle the score with Lucette.

Again the entrance to her garret stair

seemed a little unfamiliar, but again no matter, as long as he arrived at the delicious end. He mounted swiftly, and flung open the door.

Lucille Farr, tired from a long morning at her easel, had lain down after her lunch on the low divan in her studio. And much to her annoyance, for Lucille was not a very imaginative person, she had dreamed—and dreamed unpleasantly.

When she had awakened, the dream had not been very clear. Only an unpleasant memory of it remained. Still, she had dreamed that some one had wronged her, and that she had sought revenge. There had been a sea of faces in her dream—and a high platform out-of-doors in a big square, a platform that might have been a scaffold. And there had been noise and confusion and people shouting—and somewhere blood. More disquieting still, somehow the spilling of this blood had filled her with a mighty satisfaction.

With a little grimace of distaste, Lucille had turned to her easel. She was disturbed at her work by the sudden entrance of Christopher Loring.

"Hello, Christopher!" she exclaimed cheerily. "You're much too early. I told you—" And then Lucille stopped.

She glanced sharply at Loring. What was that expression on his face? It was as if his eyes blazed with hatred.

"Lucette, you did not expect me?" He grinned horribly.

"Christopher! What's the matter with you?" she asked.

He walked slowly toward her, still smiling that horrible smile. With a quick movement, he snatched from the wall an Assyrian knife. Lucille tried to scream, but her fear paralyzed her vocal chords.

"Learn, canaille that you are, that there is no death—and that a De Lomeine never forgives!"

The rest was horror, but Christophe did not lose time. Then quickly he left her, his work too thoroughly done.

Outside again—down a street and through a square and then out through an arch; then a short walk north.

Christopher Loring suddenly realized that he was outside the Hotel Brevoort. How quickly he must have walked from the club, for he did not even remember of what he had been thinking! Then a fond, almost a fatuous, expression crossed his face. Of course he must have been thinking of Lucille! His hand felt for the jewel he had bought her. He glanced at his watch. It was much too early to go and see her. It would be better to step into the Brevoort and kill an hour or two. Lucille would be better pleased to see him later on.

Inside, Loring encountered Spencer, the black-and-white artist. With Spencer was Fleming Wells, a stock-broker. Both hailed him.

"Come and have a drink," Wells insisted.

"Oh, let's go in and sit down," Loring replied. "I have an hour or so."

The three seated themselves at a table. A waiter hovered, and, later, brought them drinks.

"Have you seen Lucille?" asked Spencer, who knew her well.

"No," Loring answered. "To tell you the truth, I am waiting to go to her. You artistic people are so temperamental that you get wrought up if you are interrupted."

So they chatted. Loring demanded Spencer's views on the pendant he had bought for Lucille, and Spencer was enthusiastic.

An hour or more passed, and then Grenville, known in the world of music, came rushing through the doorway.

On catching sight of Loring, he hesitated.

"Come over here, Grenville, and join us," Spencer shouted.

Grenville came, but he did not sit down.

"What the devil is the matter with you?" demanded Wells. "You look as if you'd seen a ghost."

"Oh, my God!" groaned Grenville. "I don't know what to do! I don't know how to tell you! She—The police—Oh, I don't know!"

Little by little, they dragged it out of him—all but the name. A girl had been found murdered. Grenville had been called in by the almost frantic caretaker who had discovered her. The police were already there.

"How awful!" gasped Loring. "Oh—if it had been Lucille!"

It was Grenville's expression that told him, and for a while he refused to believe it. Then, when the ghastly certainty of Grenville convinced him, Loring, without his hat, got up and sped away from the hotel.

He ran without heed to the traffic—he ran as a man maddened by grief may run—all the way to Sheridan Square. Blindly he dashed up the stairs.

A policeman stopped him at the door of the studio apartment.

Roughly Loring pushed him aside.

"Out of my way, you fool! I'm engaged to be married to her!" and Loring did not notice that he had used the present tense.

And it was true, this horrible, horrible thing! Lucille Farr had been stabbed to death.

Loring flung himself on his knees by the couch on which they had laid her. In an agony of grief, he sobbed as only a man may sob at times.

His Lucille! Dead—done to death! And, God, how he loved her!



Alice Has Her Way

By Parker Fillmore

Author of "The Hickory Limb," "What Every Lady Wants," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY O. STEWARD IMHOFF

Destiny takes a hand in the life of William Henry Haswell. A story characterized by all the delightful observation, unconventional touches, and whimsical humor for which the author is noted.

THIS is the love story of William Henry Haswell. William Henry was thirty-three at the time, and had been married five years. The beginning of the affair dated from a breakfast that seemed at the moment no different from all other breakfasts. It was introduced by William Henry's murmuring:

"H'm. May I have some coffee?"

Alice, his wife, looked up from the morning paper with a motion of her head that reminded one of a fussy, middle-aged hen. She was a big, stout woman, and she had the habit, when looking at her husband, of inflating herself still bigger. He was a slight, blond little man at best, and when his wife ruffled her plumage at him, he shrank alarmingly.

"Hasn't he had one cup?" she boomed severely.

She looked at William Henry, but addressed her remark to the third person at table, Miss Cora Scribner, her secretary. Miss Scribner was a gaunt, horse-faced woman who always swallowed with a forward jerk of her head before she spoke. She swallowed now, then said: "Yes."

"Pass me his cup."

Alice poured out a few spoonfuls of rich brown coffee, a generous supply of hot water, a little cream, and returned the cup.

"Well," she demanded as he took one sip and pushed the cup from him, "what was it you were saying about your stenographer?"

"She's one of the Hamlin girls—Kate's youngest sister, Millie. She's been with me three weeks, but I didn't discover who she was until yesterday. I must have seen her a hundred times when she was a youngster, but I didn't recognize her. You remember her, don't you?"

"It doesn't matter whether I remember her or not. I washed my hands of Kate eight years ago, when she married that Clark man in spite of everything I could say."

"Kate is living in Kansas City now. Her husband isn't very successful. They have three children and are expecting another soon."

"What?" boomed Mrs. Haswell in tones of outraged virtue. "Four children in eight years, and goodness only knows how many more are dead and buried! I'm not one bit surprised! From the moment I laid eyes on Ell-

wood Clark, I knew he was just that kind of man!"

William Henry wanted to ask, "What kind?" but he restrained himself, remembering in time that his inability to follow his wife's mental processes was always particularly irritating to her. So, leaving the unknown Clark shrouded in the mysterious crime of which Alice had always suspected him, he asked politely:

"Have you finished the paper?"

In theory, Mrs. Haswell glanced over the headlines during breakfast, then handed the paper to her husband, who read it on the car. In practice, her answer, as on this morning, usually was:

"No, I haven't. But don't get another paper. I'll tell Geraldine to save this, and you may read it to-night."

He got as far as the door when his wife added:

"Cora and I shall be out to-night, so there won't be any dinner here. Get yourself a bite of something at the Arcadia."

Like a well-trained child in the presence of his guardian, William Henry made no comment. Nevertheless, he bought a paper at the corner and, as he opened it in the car, he said to himself:

"I'll be damned if I eat at the Arcadia again! I'm going somewhere else!"

The purchase of the extra paper had become custom long since, and had lost the novelty of disobedience, but never before had he questioned his wife's choice of a "clean, cheap, perfectly good restaurant." Nobody heard William Henry's declaration of rebellion—that is, nobody but Destiny. Destiny did hear, and after looking at him a moment, remarked significantly:

"Very well, sir! I shall see to it that you do not ever again dine at the Arcadia!"

Startled, William Henry looked up, but, not recognizing Destiny, who at

that moment had assumed the manner and appearance of an ordinary strap-hanger, he laughed nervously and decided that all he had heard was the whisper of his own guilty conscience.

From his earliest youth, William Henry had been trained to have a guilty conscience. It had been his fate to have a mother and after her a wife who had always looked on him, and who would have looked on any man they owned, with scorn. From his cradle, William Henry had been impressed with his own unworthiness. Whatever was inferior in him came from his own depraved nature or was an inheritance from his father, while for his one evidence of superiority—namely, his business ability—his mother claimed entire credit. In one sense, she was responsible for it, though not in the sense she supposed. To William Henry, business was the means of escape from domestic tyranny that social intercourse is to most young people. He had never been allowed any social life or any social intimates, and one unexpected result was a devotion to paper and twine so great that it had carried him to the head of a prosperous business before his mother's death.

Alice Gregg had been a sort of legacy from his mother. She was a distant cousin to the senior Mrs. Haswell and much like her in appearance.

"Alice and I are both real Greggs," Mrs. Haswell had been wont to say.

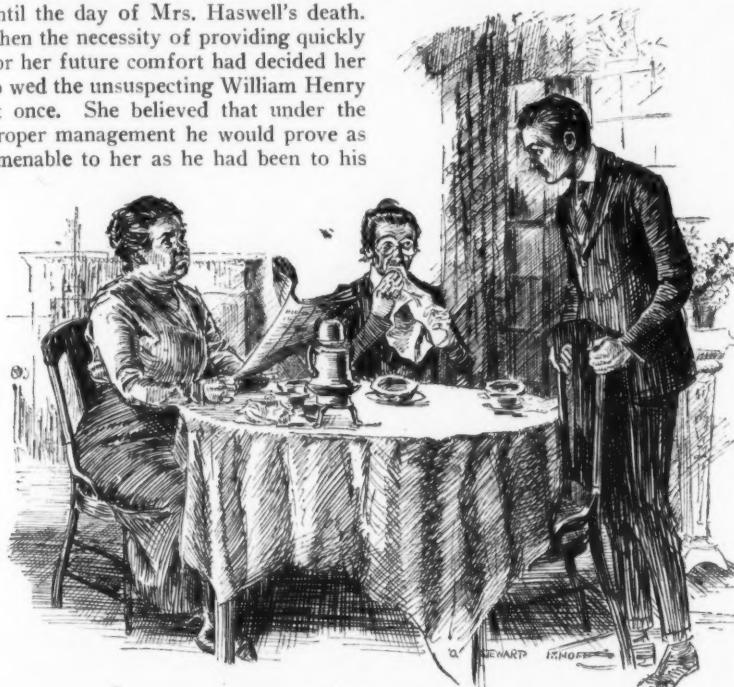
Alice's father was likewise a real Gregg, who succeeded in making miserable the life of his three daughters by adding to other Gregg characteristics that of penuriousness. Alice's two sisters had escaped their father's roof by acquiring roofs of their own, while Alice, who had no talent for matrimony, had been forced to enter that wide field of mediocrity, public-school teaching. The older Mrs. Haswell's failing health and consequent need of a companion

had afforded Alice the chance to give up teaching without returning to the unwilling bounty of her father.

The possibility of Alice's marrying William Henry had never occurred to William Henry's mother. Probably it had never occurred to Alice herself until the day of Mrs. Haswell's death. Then the necessity of providing quickly for her future comfort had decided her to wed the unsuspecting William Henry at once. She believed that under the proper management he would prove as amenable to her as he had been to his

"Do you realize the good-home you've always had?"

From infancy, he had been told that his home was a good one, and force of repetition had made him suppose it was. So he had murmured a vague: "Yes."



"Have you finished the paper?" he asked politely.

mother. In the first instance, he had proved so.

The morning after the funeral, as William Henry had been about to start for his office, Alice had asked him to step for a moment into the library. As his mother had always asked him to step for a moment into the library when she had had anything disagreeable to say, he had entered the room with a distinct feeling of foreboding.

Alice had opened on him at once.

"You wouldn't like to give it up, would you?"

To this William Henry had decided that the proper answer was: "No."

"You must know," Alice had pursued, "that if I leave, you would have to give it up, for you would have no one to manage it."

William Henry, not seeing the drift of things, had said:

"Couldn't I employ a housekeeper?"
Alice had smiled at him pityingly.

"That's more difficult than you suppose. I'd like to stay. I'd like to continue to take care of you as Cousin Grace would have wished, but—"

"But what?" William Henry had asked.

Alice had looked away in embarrassment.

"The world is censorious. You are unmarried and I am unmarried. Besides, I have to consider my father. He would not approve of my living unchaperoned in a house with an unmarried man."

"In that case—" William Henry had begun.

He had been about to say that in that case he could not expect Alice to stay, but she had interrupted him before he had got beyond the opening phrase.

"So the only thing for us to do is to get married. It's a perfectly simple matter. We'll go to the City Hall for a license and have the magistrate there perform the ceremony. We had better do it at once. No use delaying. Of course," she had added by way of encouragement, "it won't make any difference in the way we live. It's merely a matter of convenience."

The fact that Alice bore a strong physical resemblance to his mother and the further fact that the library had been the place where the older Mrs. Haswell had bullied her son innumerable times had overcome William Henry now. As in a nightmare, he had seen himself convoyed by a big woman—now she seemed to him his cousin, now his mother—to a public building familiar, yet strange, where he had written down his name and his age and his business, and whence, half an hour later, he had emerged into the blinking sunlight with the numbed consciousness that the deed was done.

"What shall I do now?" he had asked helplessly of the big woman who was his cousin—no, now she wasn't his cousin.

"Go to your office, of course!" his wife had answered sharply.

William Henry had brightened. His office was the one place in the world where he felt at home.

Marriage gave Alice the very opportunity she needed to enter upon the career of public speaker and reformer for which she had always felt Providence had intended her. She annexed to her services an unattached friend of her childhood, who as a woman was pathetically unattractive, but as a machine amazingly capable. With Cora Scribner beside her to do the actual work of her campaigning, Alice descended upon clubs, political organizations, and vice committees, and proceeded to make herself, as she expressed it, "felt in the community."

Her public career touched William Henry very slightly. For him life in the main went on as under his mother's régime. Breakfast and dinner were served at the same hours, and William Henry continued to live in the two third-story rooms that had been his since boyhood. In one respect, there was a difference. However severely the elder Mrs. Haswell may have treated her son, at heart she had been proud of him and had required from others that they show him every mark of consideration. Alice, on the contrary, once sure of her position, forgot to hide from outsiders the indifference she felt, and as a result the servants were soon regarding William Henry with insolent amusement. William Henry could have stood this philosophically enough, for he did not expect comfort at home, but when Alice began exhibiting her scorn of him in his office before his office force, William Henry's resentment kindled.

The men at the office hated her cordially, but several of the women, on various occasions, had found the sight of a henpecked husband highly diverting. Not realizing that William

Henry was as firm in his business dealings as he was weak in his domestic relations, stenographers, a long line of them, had been discharged for not controlling their feeling of amusement at William Henry's expense. To their amazement, one by one they had found that apologies and even tears were unable to move a little man who a few moments before had been as helpless as a child.

Millie Hamlin was the successor to the last of these. She was a quiet, capable little person whose manner had recommended her to William Henry from the first. Her intelligence in her work was such that, from the position of that one of the office stenographers who took William Henry's dictation, Millie was fast becoming William Henry's private secretary, to whom he was daily entrusting more and more of the office detail.

It was this growing habit of speaking to her of anything that was on his mind that made him say to her, as she was about to leave on the afternoon of the day when he had so rashly challenged Destiny:

"What's a good restaurant where I can get dinner?"

Millie thought a moment.

"The Arcadia is said to be pretty good."

"The Arcadia! That's just the place I don't want to go! I'm tired of it!"

Millie smiled apologetically.

"The truth is, Mr. Haswell, I don't know very much about restaurants except those pretty far uptown."

"Where do you dine yourself?"

"At home, usually. Another girl and I have a little apartment together, and we keep house." She paused a moment, looking at him thoughtfully. "Wouldn't you like to come home to dinner with me? I am sure Comfy would be glad to see you. Comfy is my housemate. Her real name is Louise Comfort."

This was probably the first time that William Henry had ever been invited out to dinner except as an appendage to his mother or his wife. He didn't know such things were done. He felt all the excitement of a strange adventure crowding upon him, and he had never had an adventure in his life outside of business.

"Are you sure it will seem all right to Miss Comfy?"

"Of course it will," Millie assured him. "We'd better start out together, for I don't believe you could find the place alone. That is," she added, "unless you object to my marketing as we go along."

He didn't quite know what she meant by "marketing as they went along," but he was sure he didn't object. Twenty minutes later he found himself in a neighborhood of small shops and stalls, where Millie proceeded to make what seemed to him an amazing number of small purchases. It was five cents worth of this, a quarter pound of that, and something equally infinitesimal in amount of various other things. William Henry wondered whether it wasn't a doll's party to which Millie was inviting him.

"I think I ought to make some contribution to the feast," he suggested half-humorously. "Won't you let me buy the roast?"

"The roast! You don't suppose we indulge in roasts! Our apartment isn't big enough to hold a roast! Wait till you see it. Besides, a roast would take hours to prepare. It will have to be something more modest."

They compromised on a steak, and William Henry selected one that Millie declared was large enough to feed a family of ten.

Laden with small parcels, they climbed the stairs of Millie's "walk-up" apartment. Millie's housemate was there to receive them. She was a stout, red-cheeked girl, whose pleasant ex-

pression was in keeping with the quality her nickname suggested.

"This is Mr. Haswell," Millie said by way of introduction. "He's come to have dinner with us to-night."

Comfy's smile broadened, and she welcomed William Henry with a cordiality that took away his breath.

"Why, this is Billy, isn't it? I'm awfully glad to know you, Billy. I've heard so much about you!"

William Henry blinked and stuttered and finally murmured: "How do you do, Miss Comfy."

"Just drop the 'Miss,'" Comfy suggested pleasantly. "I guess we're all friends here."

Millie, flushed and embarrassed, shut Comfy off by sending her to the kitchen with the parcels.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Haswell," she whispered, "and it's really my fault. I've always spoken of you as Billy. You see, it didn't occur to me that Comfy would ever meet you. She's a dear and she's as good as gold, but she's a little expansive on first acquaintance."

Millie was much distressed, and William Henry, by this time amused, tried hard to reassure her.

"No one has ever called me Billy, but I'd like it if they did. It's a more sensible name than William Henry."

Millie brightened.

"We've always called you Billy at home. Kate started it years ago. She used to say the only thing the matter with you was that no one had ever called you Billy." She paused and flushed again. "Mr. Haswell, I didn't realize what I was saying. Pardon me. I don't mean that there was anything the matter with you except that you were shy and quiet."

But William Henry's feelings were far from hurt.

"Don't explain to Comfy," he said hurriedly. He had to speak hurriedly, as Comfy herself was returning with a loud question about butter.

Millie thanked him with a glance, then called out to Comfy:

"It's in the bag with the lettuce. Wait, I'll find it. This is my night as chef, so you stay with Billy and set the table."

"It's a jolly little place you've got here," he said to Comfy as that young woman began to clear the table of books and reading lamp.

"Isn't it?" she said. "Millie and I are as happy in it as two children playing house. Now give me a hand, please, with the table. We'll take it over to the couch. That's it. Thanks. I expect to recline on the couch during dinner, like the noblest Roman of them all. By the way, do you want to cook?"

At this William Henry looked so blank that Comfy had to explain:

"All the men who come here have some little kitchen trick that they love to show off. One man broils meat, another makes salad dressing, another deceiving coffee that tastes innocent enough, but is deadly. You see they drop in any time and have dinner with us, and so they feel they have to do something to help."

William Henry tried to imagine what these fortunate youths looked like, but he could not. He wondered did they realize how fortunate they were. Just to think of it! They dropped in any time and had dinner with two sweet, jolly girls, instead of having to go home night after night to some stout, middle-aged person who never opened her mouth except to say something impatient or censorious!

To William Henry, dinner had always been one of those uninteresting, but necessary processes of life that recur with unvarying regularity like, say, shaving. To-night it was something different—a celebration, a game that excited easy laughter and light-hearted jokes, a stimulant that gave zest to appetite and a wonderful flavor to food. William Henry had never

tasted so fine a steak; the salad was delicious, the coffee simply intoxicating.

"I've never been so hungry in my life," he murmured apologetically.

"That's the way they all talk when they come here," Comfy said. She squinted her eyes confidentially. "I tell you our little 'Millie is some cook!'"

Both girls were frankly pleased at his enthusiasm, and showered their hospitality upon him in a way that touched and flattered him. And throughout, instead of taking for granted that he was shy and awkward, with nothing to say, they accepted him as a human being like themselves. As a result, the cloud of self-consciousness that usually enveloped him lifted, and he was able to enjoy to the utmost the novelty of the moment.

"I can't tell you both what a pleasant evening I've had," he said as he bade them good night. "I've enjoyed every moment of it."

Millie laughed.

"If you really prefer us to the Arcadia, we'll expect you to give us first choice next time."

"Next time!" he kept repeating to himself as he went home.

"I wonder what will Alice say," Destiny whispered, slipping up behind him in the dark. "What will she say to your dining with your stenographer?"



"Why, this is Billy, isn't it? I'm awfully glad to know you, Billy. I've heard so much about you!"

William Henry, again mistaking Destiny's voice for the whisper of his own guilty conscience, shrugged his shoulders and answered shortly:

"Alice won't say anything about it because Alice won't know anything about it."

"Let us hope so," Destiny murmured with an intonation that left William Henry a little disquieted.

II.

This was the beginning of a new life for William Henry. On the days when Alice would casually remark: "I'm not going to be home to-night, so get yourself a bite of something at the Arcadia,"

he would say to Millie: "What about dinner? Suppose we get Comfy and go out somewhere." He soon realized how much both girls enjoyed "going out somewhere," and Millie knew how much he enjoyed dining at home with them. So sometimes it was one arrangement, sometimes the other.

As time went by, he became acquainted with the various men whom Millie and Comfy knew. They were still young, most of them, and all still poor. A mad lot they seemed at first, always either boisterously gay or darkly depressed, never by any chance living in the even humdrum that William Henry knew as life. Just to be with youngsters of such violent emotions began to stir in William Henry strange feelings and new thoughts.

They accepted William Henry as an old friend of Millie's and asked no further questions. Also, they took for granted that, like them, he saw beauty in a line of chimney pots against the sky, or in the faded blue of a workman's blouse, or why should he be happy "playing around" with men whose chief interests in life were architecture, drama, and color?

Destiny, still William Henry's friend, suddenly shipped off Alice and the faithful Cora for a three-months' sojourn in California, offering as most plausible excuse the biennial of a federation of clubs. Alice decided that there was no reason to keep open her home merely for William Henry, so she sent him and a small trunk to a modest, not to say uncomfortable, room in a modest, most uncomfortable hotel, and departed with these last words:

"And get your meals at the Arcadia."

William Henry had three wonderful months. He found out for the first time that his native city offered innumerable attractions wherewith to divert a lone man bereft of home and wife, but still possessed of the society of a few choice friends. He learned all

sorts of new things. He learned, for instance, how to give parties and order dinners. He became as expert as Comfy in what, in moments of elegance, she called the "silent drama," and he was soon able to listen with intelligence when talk shifted to the "spoken drama." William Henry even sounded the depths of that ironically named performance, the Sunday concert. All his new amusements were innocent enough, it must be confessed, and no one but a man whose youth had been as barren as his would have found them exciting. To William Henry, they were thrilling.

He supposed that, on Alice's return, he would have to go back to his old way of seeing his new friends only on evenings when Alice was out, but when the time came, he asked himself why. It meant nothing to Alice to have him dine with her, so why make a martyr of himself on evenings when he might dine elsewhere with pleasure? It was, of course, out of the question for him to say: "I'm dining to-night with my stenographer and a few friends," so he hit upon another statement to explain satisfactorily a proposed absence from the family board. Other men have probably hit upon the same excuse, but William Henry thought it out for himself and in so far it was original with him.

"To-night," he said, and the first time he said it he spoke with considerable trepidation, "to-night I have a business engagement that will keep me out late. So don't expect me home to dinner."

Alice received the announcement so indifferently that thereafter William Henry made it frequently and, as time went by, even carelessly.

Too carelessly, perhaps, for Destiny, seeing William Henry's growing confidence, decided it was time to throw him on his own. As a result, in one half hour William Henry's new life was shattered to bits, and William Henry himself left more helpless and alone

than ever before. It happened in this wise:

It was Saturday afternoon, and the office force had left early, all but Millie. She was waiting for William Henry to close his desk, as they were going out together to meet Comfy. It was a sultry day in June, and Millie felt tired and languid. Moreover, she had had bad news in a letter. She opened the letter again, and as she reread it, her eyes filled with tears. A few moments later, when William Henry came out from the inner office, he found her sobbing.

"Millie! What is it?"

She tried to control her sobs.

"I suppose it's because I'm tired. I've just heard from poor Kate. The baby's never been well, and Kate's never been able to regain her strength. This means they both have needed the comforts that a little money could have given, and they just haven't had them. It breaks my heart not to be able to help, but I can't because I've always got to share with old Aunt Sally."

Millie went back to her handkerchief, and William Henry fumbled at his wallet.

"Millie, why can't I send through you a little present to Kate? I wish you'd let me. She can think it's from you, and it's nobody else's business."

He placed on the desk near Millie's hand three folded bills.

Without lifting her eyes, Millie shook her head.

"Thanks, Billy, but I don't see how I can. If things get worse for her or the baby, I may have to come to you, but not yet."

To give a scrupulously exact account of a scene that had momentous bearing on William Henry's later life, just here it must be recorded that he laid his hand lightly on Millie's bowed head. Some women scream if a man touches their hair. Millie did not belong to this class. William Henry's hand seemed to comfort rather than disturb her. Her

sobs quieted, and William Henry, encouraged, stroked her head gently.

It was at this moment that the outer door of the office was flung open dramatically and William Henry's legal wife entered, followed by her faithful henchwoman, Cora Scribner. From her manner of entrance, an onlooker would have supposed that she had been squinting through the keyhole for some time, expecting just such a scene. But the onlooker would be mistaken. This was merely Alice's customary manner. She always dashed into a room or a meeting or a crowded car with all the violence possible, and then paused and glared about her.

This time, when she glared, she found something to glare at. William Henry, in fright and embarrassment, hadn't power to remove his hand from Millie's hair, and as Millie raised her head, the hand slipped down to her shoulder, where it remained.

For several seconds, Alice stood and glared at what she always termed thereafter "the guilty pair."

"So!" she hissed finally. "So, William Henry Haswell, I've caught you at last! My woman's intuition has always told me that I should! Cora Scribner, take out your notebook and make a memorandum of every word that is said!"

"But, Alice," William Henry began feebly, "you don't understand."

"Sir," that lady thundered with flashing eyes, "not a word from you! The time for talking is past! It is time to act, and I shall act! Ha! Now I understand why you have been absent night after night from the family board! Business, indeed! Deny if you dare that you've been spending evenings with this woman!"

William Henry was in no condition to deny or affirm anything.

Alice glared some more, then threw her eyes tragically to the ceiling.

"Oh, God!" she breathed. "To think

that this should be the reward of years of faithful and loving wifehood!" One could see that she saw herself in her mind's eye and admired the sight prodigiously. "But at least I thank Thee that I have no babes, no poor, innocent little babes, to share with me the shame of this moment! Have you got that down, Cora?"

"—shame of this moment," Miss Scribner repeated.

"Consider, just consider the vulgarity of the situation!" It was Heaven again from whom Alice was begging consideration. "The scene, a deserted office. The *dramatis personæ* an employer and his stenographer. The employer in the act of stanching the stenographer's tears with money. The relation between the two is obvious. Enter the wronged wife. The employer and stenographer speechless with guilt."

Millie, her tears forgot, had been gazing at Alice with amazement at first, then indignation, and finally amusement. Now she spoke:

"Alice, you're as great fool as ever!"

"Alice!" Mrs. Haswell screamed. "The hussy dares address me by my Christian name!"

"Why not?" Millie asked. "As I've known you all my life as Alice, wouldn't it be affection now to call you anything else? You're the same Alice Gregg that you were when I was a child, and the scene you've just enacted is the sort of thing you've always delighted in. I don't expect you to hear what I'm saying, for I know you too well to expect you to hear anything but your own voice. Yet, as Cora Scribner is making a record of our remarks, just to leave you no excuse for your nonsense, I'm going to say that I was crying a moment ago on account of this letter from Kate, in which she tells of the illness of her baby. Your husband, out of the kindness of his heart, wanted to send Kate this money, which I have refused.

"I know this explanation will make no difference to you, because I know the wonderful time you will have talking. But I warn you of one thing. If you use my name in the dramatic monologue that you've already sketched in your mind, I'll sue you for libel. I've given you the facts, and all I should need as witness and evidence that I have are poor Cora Scribner here and her notebook. Have you got that down, Cora?"

"—and her notebook," Miss Scribner repeated mechanically.

"Ah," Alice murmured, "I recognize you now. You are one of the younger Hamlin children. I remember you perfectly. But don't think to hide behind old acquaintance. Right is right and wrong is wrong. Yet, culpable as this girl is, it is upon you, William Henry Haswell, a man of your age, that the onus of blame must rest. Mark my words, William Henry Haswell. Whatever misfortunes hereafter overtake her, you will always know that you are responsible for them."

"Really, Billy," Millie protested, "aren't you going to protect me just a little from her insults?"

"Billy!" Alice shouted. "She calls him Billy! Put that down, Cora!"

William Henry moved unhappily, like a man in the chains of a nightmare. He wanted to rally to Millie's defense, but when he tried to speak, his throat seemed to close, and his voice trailed off into nothing.

"Now, Alice——" he began.

"Sir, not a word from you!" Alice turned majestically. Halfway to the door, she paused. "Needless to say, William Henry Haswell, after this discovery it would be impossible, not to say immoral, for me to remain under the same roof with you. If you will tell me where you intend henceforth to live, I shall have your suit case, containing your belongings, sent to you."

William Henry, scarcely grasping

the fact that Alice proposed turning him out of his own house, clutched at a mere detail of the situation and murmured:

"You better let me get my suit case myself. You don't know where my things are."

"Very well," his wife announced with what, in platform parlance, would be termed "rare dignity." "I trust," she continued, "that you will have the decency to remove yourself and your bags before seven o'clock, when I expect to dine—alone. Come, Cora."

Miss Scribner closed her notebook, swallowed, unearred her spectacles, and hurried out.

Millie stood up briskly.

"Good moving-picture stuff—that I feel quite cheered. For your sake, I'm sorry, for Alice means mischief." She held out her hand. "Good-by, Billy."

"Do you mean you're going—for good?"

Millie nodded.

"Nothing else to do. Alice is on the warpath, and it would be foolish of me to put myself in her way."

William Henry wanted to detain her, but how could he? Hadn't he just shown how helpless he was to protect her? No, he couldn't urge her to stay and, feeling shamefaced and craven, he let her go.

III.

All her life, Alice had been looking for a grievance, and now that she had one, she proceeded to make the most of it. She talked of it in public and she talked of it in private, going over the outrage in careful detail again and again to any one who would listen. Millie she always referred to as "one of those stenographer creatures." She talked so much and so violently that finally she simply had to make good her threat of suing for divorce. William Henry did not contest the suit, and in due time

Mrs. Haswell became again by legal process Miss or Mrs. Alice Gregg.

Alice did not ask for alimony. She could not, after allowing herself the extravagance of a newspaper interview in which she denounced those despicable women who, after they have outlived their husbands' love, continue to live on said husbands' money. In a private interview later, she descended a few steps from this high moral ground.

"As a result of one of the injustices to women in the present social system," she explained grandiosely, "until I have established myself as a public speaker—for the space of a month, perhaps, or two months—I shall have to force myself to accept from you the use of your house and my usual income."

Alice fluffed her plumage and glared, and her former husband murmured meekly that this arrangement would be entirely satisfactory to him.

In justice to Alice, it should be stated that she really did expect to become at once a great public speaker. She hadn't the least doubt of her own ability. Her years of indifferent teaching had made her, in her own opinion, an authority on all matters of education; she felt herself better qualified than Charlotte Perkins Gilman to speak on Woman and Economics; and since her recent marital experience, she was convinced that she could go more deeply than Ellen Key into such subjects as Love, Marriage, and Divorce. In the past, owing to her persistence, leisure, and willingness to pay her own expenses, she had been able to force herself upon the programs of various clubs throughout the country. She was certain that all these clubs would now be eager to reengage her at professional rates. So she and Cora got out elaborate announcements; she wrote to various lecture bureaus; and then she sat down to wait for the opening of what she termed "her life work."



"So!" she hissed finally. "So, William Henry Haswell, I've caught you at last! My woman's intuition has always told me that I should!"

While she sat and waited, William Henry paid expenses on the same scale as before the divorce. He paid them one month, two months, three months, and then month after month.

It was an unhappy time for him. He was living on in the same uncomfortable little hotel room to which he had gone the night Alice had sent him packing. He disliked the room and he disliked the hotel, but what difference would it make, he asked himself, where he slept since wherever he went he would be equally miserable? He spent more and more time at his office, using work as an anodyne. There was other excuse for this, as the paper trade was in a state of serious upheaval owing to the sudden scarcity of raw material

and the growing demands created by the Great War, which had been devastating Europe now for more than a year.

The memory of Millie haunted him. He didn't know that he was in love with her, for he was inexperienced in labeling his own emotions, but he knew now that the only happy hours of his life had been passed in her society. She was the only person in the world who had been unfailingly kind and gentle to him, and this even at the moment when he had so miserably failed her. As she had been leaving that last afternoon, she had turned back from the door to say: "You poor old Billy, she has got you bluffed, hasn't she?" Even then there had been no reproach

in her tone. Since that afternoon William Henry had not tried to see her, at first on account of the impending suit and later because of the shame he continued to feel for his own weakness.

A year went by, and it was June again and Saturday when he chanced upon her late one afternoon in the park. She smiled at him brightly and made room for him on the bench beside her.

"Dear old Billy!" she said. "I'm awfully glad to see you! How are you?"

Without a word of what had passed, they were on the old friendly footing almost at once. She didn't despise him, apparently; she didn't even remember his cowardice. The misery of the year rolled away from his heart, and like a boy he longed to perform some extravagant act whereby he could prove to her his gratitude and devotion.

As they talked, Millie glanced at him thoughtfully once or twice and at last remarked:

"Yes, I think I'll tell you. I've lost my job to-day, the third I've lost since leaving you. I'm not sure what happened the other times, but to-day Mr. Morrow was frank with me and told me that Mrs. Alice Gregg, formerly Mrs. William Henry Haswell, had informed his wife that it was I, Mr. Morrow's present stenographer, who had wrecked dear Alice's home. She must have given homewrecking as my profession, for Mrs. Morrow started off on my trail at once. Mr. Morrow said they were a pair of fool women, but even so, for his own comfort, he would have to ask me to go."

Over William Henry the tide of guilt rolled back. He remembered Alice's prophecy that he and he alone would be responsible for any misfortune that might in the future overtake Millie. This, no doubt, was the beginning. In agony of mind, he wondered what he could do to protect Millie. Suddenly an idea flashed upon him.

"Millie, you know I'm free. Now listen here. She couldn't injure you any more if you were to marry me."

"Marry you?" Millie paused, then asked abruptly: "Billy, are you sure you are in a position to propose marriage to me or to any other woman?"

"What do you mean?"

"For one thing, have you a home to offer me?"

"Well, no, not exactly. That is—"

"Have you an income sufficient to maintain a new wife in the same style your former wife was maintained?"

In the present state of the paper trade, William Henry knew that his business could not support a second establishment as expensive as the first one used to be and still was, so in honesty he stammered:

"Well, no, not exactly."

Millie sat up very straight.

"It's just as I supposed. You're still keeping that woman!"

William Henry floundered.

"You wouldn't want me to turn her out on the street."

"Why not?"

"Think what might happen to her!"

"Think what might happen to her? My dear Billy, what could happen to her? Are you afraid some one would kidnap her?"

William Henry stood up with a sigh. "I've got to get back to the office. I'm expecting a phone, and there's no one there to take it. Suppose you come, too. I'll be finished soon and then perhaps, if you have no other engagement, I can persuade you to have dinner with me."

Millie nodded acceptance, and a few moments later they were in William Henry's deserted offices. William Henry opened his desk, and Millie seated herself on the stenographer's chair, where she used to take dictation.

"But, Millie," William Henry began, continuing aloud the train of thought in his mind, "can't you see my position?"

Where would she go if I turned her out?"

"The obvious place for her to go would be home."

"Do you mean to her father? She would never consent to that."

"That's just the very place she would have to go to-morrow if you stopped keeping her, and that's the one place in the world where she'd be welcome."

The telephone rang, and Millie waited until William Henry had received the message. Then she continued:

"Old Gregg lives in that big house in Lindon with a housekeeper and one maid. He'd be delighted to have Alice back, for he could give her the housekeeper's job and not have to pay her wages. The old man may be a miser, but there's one thing to be said to his credit—he can make even Alice work."

William Henry sighed again.

"I suppose you think me an utter coward."

"No, Billy, I don't. I know what's the matter with you."

"I wish I knew."

"I'll tell you. You're suffering from a malady very common in modern fiction. It's known as a fear complex. From the time you were born, you've been bullied by a stout, red-faced, middle-aged woman. You're grown up now, and in the world at large you're perfectly well able to take care of yourself. I can't imagine any one bullying you in business. But let a stout, red-faced, middle-aged woman look at you fiercely, and she reduces you at once to a small boy, frightened and helpless. Isn't this true?"

William Henry unhappily acknowledged that it was.

"And it always will be until you face it out. If once you look at that woman and see her as she is and face her out, you'll wonder you ever stood her foolishness a moment. Well, where are we going?"

As they paused to debate this, they heard a loud, imperative knocking at the door of the outer office.

"A special delivery, perhaps," William Henry said. "I better see."

Millie shook her head.

"That's too imperious for a postman." She listened attentively. "It sounds to me like Alice."

Startled by the suggestion, William Henry hesitated.

"I don't think I'll open the door. It's after office hours."

"Don't be a goose. Of course you'll open the door. Or shall I go?"

The knocking redoubled, and William Henry turned slowly to the outer office. Millie ran after him and put her hands on his shoulders.

"Billy dear, if it is Alice, remember two things." She looked up into his face with an expression of tenderness that he had never seen before. "Two things, Billy—you're not a small boy that anybody can bully, and she's only a stout, red-faced, middle-aged woman who has no possible claim on you. I'll stay in here and close the door, and she needn't know I'm here. But you'll know it. You'll know I'm listening, and you'll know I'm backing you."

There was no doubt in William Henry's mind now that the visitor was Alice, for no else he knew would treat a door as that door was being treated. He opened it, and Alice burst into the room, followed by Cora Scribner, who ducked and swallowed as she entered.

"May I ask why I have been kept waiting in this manner at the door when the elevator man assured me you were still here?"

Alice's question was addressed to the empty office at large and included, as it might another chair, the shrinking form of her one-time husband.

"I'm sorry," William Henry murmured.

"It's outrageous!" Alice snorted.

She fluffed her plumage, glared about the empty office, and seated herself.

"Cora," she commanded, "take that chair over there and get out your notebook."

William Henry, still standing, awkward and ill at ease, felt the old fear coursing through his limbs and numbing his mind. Then suddenly he remembered Millie, and with a jerk his mind recovered itself. What was it Millie had told him to remember? *He was no longer a small boy that anybody could bully.* Of course not! He was a grown man, at the head of a prosperous business. Nobody could bully him! Nobody! And who was this person that was fluffing her plumage at him and at this very moment trying to bully him? He looked at her as if he had never seen her before, and as he looked, it seemed to him an amazing transformation took place. The terrifying creature of a moment before turned into a stout—oh, quite stout!—red-faced—exceedingly red-faced!—middle-aged woman who hadn't—What was it she hadn't? Why, she hadn't any claim on him in the world!

For William Henry, the spell began to break, the old nightmare began to lift. He was William Henry Haswell, in his own office, and his strongest feeling was impatience that this person should be taking up precious moments that he might be spending with Millie. While Alice was still getting her breath, he seated himself and remarked:

"I was about to write you, Alice, so it's just as well—"

"Alice!" that lady boomed. "How dare you address me as Alice? To you, sir, I am Mrs. Gregg."

"Very well." By this time, William Henry's manner was easy. Shyness as well as fear seemed to be leaving him. "I am glad, Mrs. Gregg, of this opportunity of seeing you, as I have something of considerable importance to say to you."

"What you have to say, sir, may wait until you have heard what I have to say."

Alice paused to let the full force of this reproof sink into William Henry's soul. Then, turning to the imaginary audience that filled the empty office, she began:

"I presume you have heard of the recent organization of the Society for the Dissemination of Moral Prophylactics. At a time like this, when all Europe is engaged in butchery and debauchery for which both sides are to blame—I repeat, both sides are to blame—and when the empty-pated demagogues of this country are doing their best to push us, too, into the war—at this time it is all the more important for the few of us who have clear vision to stand out firmly for those principles of enlightened purity upon which the new society is founded. To carry forward its wonderful work, the society needs one hundred thousand dollars at once. You have probably seen from the papers that I have been appointed to the finance committee. As a member of that committee, I have come to tell you that your name is in the five-hundred-dollar class."

Alice looked at him severely and nodded. It almost seemed to him that she clucked.

"Am I to understand that you have come here expecting to collect five hundred dollars from me?"

"Not exactly. I take it for granted you will subscribe that amount. I think I am justified in taking this for granted. Your position in the community warrants me, I think, in demanding a subscription of this amount. Your contributions to the Belgian Relief and the Red Cross have far exceeded this, and yet I can assure you that all war work, by its very nature, is temporary and passing, while the work of this new organization is intended for the permanent benefit of mankind."

"I'll think the matter over," William Henry said, "and communicate with you in two or three days. Are you finished?"

"Not quite. It makes no difference to you whether or not your subscription appears under your own name, and it would mean much to me, in the position I am making for myself in the community and in the country at large, to appear as a generous donor. So, under these circumstances, I wish your subscription to appear under my name."

"Since you put the matter that way," William Henry announced quietly, "I can answer you at once. I shall not subscribe one cent either under your name or my own. Have you got that down, Cora?"

"You will not?" shouted the late Mrs. Haswell. "I say you will! It is too late now for you not to! I have already handed in my personal check, thereby reducing my bank account to a mere nothing, but I have drawn a draft on you, William Henry Haswell, for the full amount! I drew it this morning in the bank. Now say you won't if you dare!"

William Henry listened in amazement, realizing at last the colossal cheek of the woman. Her conceit, too, and her monumental stupidity, parading itself in long-winded phrases as empty of sense as they were full of sound!

"As you have given your personal check," he said, "at least the Society for the Dissemination of Moral Prophylactics will not suffer from our little disagreement. The draft, then, is merely between you and me. I tell you at once that under no circumstances will I honor that draft."

Mrs. Alice Gregg jumped to her feet with bristling plumage and flashing eyes.

"I say you will! It is little enough, William Henry Haswell, that I ask of you!"

She stood over him with brandished

arms, and for a moment the old fear threatened to engulf him. His mind clutched frantically for Millie's magic phrase. What was it? Ah, he had it!

"I'm not a small boy," he cried, "and you can't bully me!" He stood up slowly, to bring his eyes on a level with her own. "Do you understand? I'm not a small boy, and you can't bully me! I'm a man and my own master, and I won't be dictated to by you, a stout, red-faced, middle-aged woman," but that, after all, was a little personal, so he simply repeated, "by you!"

Alice blinked, not getting at once the full significance of his declaration of independence, but startled, nevertheless, by what seemed to her an attempt at insubordination.

"What are you talking about? Who said you were a small boy?"

William Henry, calm by this time, looked at her steadily. He even smiled a little.

"Do you want me to go over it again?" Now that he had shouted it out once, it seemed to him too obvious to need repetition. "I was just remarking that I'm a man and in a position to know my own mind, and when I say to you I'm not going to honor that draft, I mean it. Now do you understand?"

There was no possibility of any one's not understanding the finality of decision in those sharp, businesslike tones.

"Wh-wh-what?" Alice stammered.

Her plumage drooped, her arms fell, her face, from which the color fled, began to tremble. Of course she had no possible claim on him, and she must have known she hadn't. But it was plain that she had never expected him to know it, and the sudden realization that he did was a shock. "Wh-wh-what?" she repeated weakly.

"Sit down, Alice, and behave," William Henry commanded, speaking gruffly as one would to a naughty child.

Like a child, she obeyed, and, curiously enough, it seemed to him only natural that she should. The time when she held him in subjection already seemed so far past that he scarcely remembered it.

"Now that you have finished your matter," he said, "I want you to listen to mine. I'm not going to make you any further allowance, and in two weeks—that is to say, before the first of the month—I wish you to vacate my house."

Stupefaction overspread Alice's face.

"Do you mean to turn me out on the street?"

William Henry smiled. How foolish that phrase was!

"William Henry, you can't mean that! What will become of me?"

"I don't care what becomes of you. You're nothing to me, and I'm nothing to you, and this immoral situation of my keeping you has gone on long enough. It stops right now."

It was a terrible moment for Alice, a tragic moment, one that called for supreme dramatic action. As she had no instinctive sincerity to guide her, the best she could do was to enact a scene of cheap melodrama. So she flopped down on her fat knees, held out supplicating hands, and lifted her chin in ingénue fashion.

"Oh, William Henry, remember the past and have mercy! Just give me two or three months more, and I'll be established as a public speaker. I know I shall!"

She was not a pleasant sight, groveling there on the floor, nor an amusing one, and William Henry, shutting his eyes, waved her back.

"Cut it out, Alice! Cut it out! This sort of thing doesn't get me one least little bit!"

She saw it didn't and awkwardly pulled herself to her feet and sat down. Her world was falling to pieces, and she knew it. But she didn't know as

yet that she was not going to be able to save any of the pieces.

"Even without the allowance," she begged, "couldn't you let me have the house for a few months? I need it for professional purposes."

William Henry shook his head.

"No. You'll have to use your father's house for professional purposes."

"My father's house! Do you think I'll go back to Lindon? Never!" For an instant her old spirit returned, Then it subsided and she began to whimper. "William Henry, you don't know what you're saying. My father would make me spend my days at housework! I should have to wash windows! There are sixty-eight windows in that old house!"

If it could have given William Henry any pleasure to see his former wife humiliated, this would have been a happy moment. But it didn't occur to William Henry to gloat. In fact, all he felt now was boredom and fatigue. He tried to close the interview.

"Alice, you've had your own way in everything for a good many years, and all I've ever done until to-day is pay bills. You married me to suit your own conscience; you got a divorce for the sensational publicity it gave you and the chance to talk; you scorned demanding alimony, which at that time I should have been foolish enough to pay, but you've been grafting money from me ever since greater in amount than alimony would have been. I suppose this arrangement between us would have gone on for years if you hadn't done one thing too much. You overreached yourself in hunting down poor little Millie and turning her out of her jobs. Yet that's the one thing you've ever done for which I'm grateful, for if you hadn't done it, I might never have married Millie."

"Married Millie! Have you married Millie?"

"I'm marrying her on Monday." For the first time in his life, William Henry felt masterful. He even wanted to strut a little. "You see, I can't get a license before Monday."

"So that's it!" Alice moaned. "I might have known!"

"Yes, that's it. That's why you and I have to settle up accounts to-day. That's why I want my home to be ready for me when Millie and I return to the city the first of the month. You see, Alice, I've got to marry Millie, for I see no other way to protect her against your animosity. It's my duty to marry her. Happily for me, my heart's dearest wish meets duty more than halfway. But let me assure you, Alice, I shall never forget it was you who were the means of making me see that it was my duty to marry Millie."

Alice stood up heavily.

"Come, Cora," she said.

At the door, she paused.

"I little expected such treatment from you, William Henry Haswell."

William Henry smiled in spite of himself, realizing to the full the truth of his statement.

As Alice passed through the door, Destiny slipped in, William Henry's old friend Destiny who had neglected William Henry for a long year, but was now come back to do him a good turn. William Henry felt him enter like a strong draft at the back of the neck. He half turned to see if Alice had left the door open. But the next instant he forgot doors and drafts and retreating Alices, he forgot everything but Millie, little Millie who was coming out from the inner office.

"Shucks!" murmured Destiny, after one look at Millie's face. "No use my sticking around here! He doesn't need me any longer!"



OH, PAIN, COME BACK TO STAY!

MY youth has gone in a rush of pain.
(Ah, nothing hurts me now!)
A peaceful spirit, mine—a gain?
I'm glad sometimes, I vow.

My heart grew cold in a fevered hurt.
(My lover tired of me.)
But just last night, in a soft rain spurt,
I saw two kiss in the sheltering wet,
Kiss so tenderly.

Then did I wish I might feel woe,
A sweet, wild fear of men and love,
Hurt's sister, passion; feeling, so,
The magic touch with stars above.

The younger I has fled in pain.
(Ah, nothing hurts to-day!)
A drab, still soul, mine, but—life vain!
Oh, pain, come back with my young heart!
Oh, pain, come back to stay!

KATHARINE HAVILAND TAYLOR.

Temperature 105

By E. Albert Apple

Author of "Big Bill, Salmon Trout," "The Timber Ghost," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. A. FURMAN

In which Graziello Blucherne, beautiful adventuress, "loses out."

THE prettiest baby in Montreal grew up under the name of Graziello Blucherne. Had she, at twenty-four, not retained her superiority of charm and acquired the subtle, electric stage presence, her midnight appointment with Mr. Justice Balmoral would have been impossible—the bare suggestion ridiculous.

The house was of pink quartz from the Thunder Bay district, an enormous labyrinth of rooms done with seductive luxuriance. It had all the stage settings of a rendezvous, for dwellings are scattered and estates huge in the exclusive residential district of the Mount Royal Summit Drive, overlooking Westmount and the McGill Botanical Gardens.

Armand Balmoral, of the King's Bench, watching nervously at a window of his lounging room on the second floor, observed with satisfaction that she left her sleigh well down the winding road. So far she was following the instructions of his note with care. There was a man with her, an upright wolf figure in an enveloping raccoon coat, with a collar that folded tightly around his fur cap. Balmoral frowned.

"Well, doctor," he announced vexedly to his lone companion, "here she comes. But she's brought a companion. I told her to present herself alone."

The bearded medical man grunted interestedly. The Ojibwa Indian

valet, the only one of the servants whom the white-haired justice had felt it safe to trust, led the two visitors into the lounge and retreated with no more noise than a blue fox closing in on a ptarmigan. They wriggled out of their furs without preliminaries.

"Twenty-eight below zero!" cackled the man, a gaunt individual with pronounced "breed" bones and anæmic face, whom Balmoral recognized as Malcolm McGarr, a lawyer who had appeared before him in court on frequent occasions as the representative of gambling and all-night drinking resorts near the Place Vige Station. "And five feet of snow!"

Mr. Justice Balmoral eyed him as if he were a strange, rowdy dog that might at any instant knock over some of the room's choice porcelain.

"I address Mademoiselle Graziello Blucherne, I presume?"

"You have the honor, you mean!" prompted the girl tartly. "My, judge, you're as handsome as I'd heard! Wonderful white hair—No wonder they call you the Silver Fox!"

The justice frowned severely.

"We will dispense with personalities," he retorted coldly.

"What a lovely home!" effused Graziello, clapping her hands in complete ease. "And what, pray, are the white birds with pink bills in that long bamboo cage?"

"Java sparrows!" said the judge shortly.



The Indian valet led the two visitors into the lounge and retreated with no more noise than a blue fox closing in on a ptarmigan.

"Some class! It was a wretchedly cold trip. Aren't you going to serve—at least a cordial?"

The doctor tilted the swivel silver wine cup and filled four glasses with sauterne.

"No, thank you," the judge refused with dignity. "I am not accustomed to having an adventuress and a shyster lawyer drink in my home. If it be forced, or incidental to a gentleman's hospitality, I will, at least, not join them."

Graziello smiled indifferently, though she flushed faintly.

"You're very undiplomatic, judge. And I should imagine that strategy would be an asset. You really must want something very badly, to write me such a compromising letter asking for a midnight interview."

"Compromising?" chimed in Lawyer McGarr with amazement, gulping a second glass and clucking in his right cheek. "My word! Compromising!

"No name for it! Letter's worth fifty thou' before any jury. And from the great Mr. Justice Armand Balmoral! I can just see the headlines in the French-Canadian newspapers."

"Yes, I want something," admitted Balmoral, ignoring the barrister's gibe. "But I imagine you are a woman of high price. So that is the famous twenty-thousand-dollar silver-fox coat you brought down from Porcupine. I heard about it."

Graziello coughed delicately.

"You desired something?" she pursued, selecting a featherbed of a chair and coiling her feet up under her.

"I certainly do. You are a hard woman of the world—to come directly to the point. My son is but seventeen. Until you met him, he was as innocent—of wine, night lights, and all that accompany them—as the first snows in Far-North Quebec. A good curling match was his idea of dissipation. But now—now—my God, what a change!

Gone from his parents' roof for days at a stretch! He's even drinking this cursed French-Canadian white-wheat whisky. When are you going to give him up?"

Graziello had lighted a perfumed cigarette poised in her gold ring holder. She inhaled luxuriously, blowing the smoke forth in a dainty stream with a slight gasp of ecstasy. One foot crept forth from beneath her gown; she extended it a trifle and studied the champagne silk stockings.

"I'm not going to give him up—not for the present, at least," she countered warily. "He's a charming chap—so ingenuous, so refreshing. In fact, I'm quite fond of him."

"Oh, yes, you are!" The judge spoke with confidence. "You're going to drop him to-night before you leave here. I had not realized, until the doctor approached me, that affairs had reached such an advanced stage. I know enough now to satisfy me that my suspicions have been correct. Doctor Laughlin, you might tell these persons—what you confided to me."

The physician scroached back into his brown Russian-leather lounging chair, his extended legs crossed at the ankles, and nervously twirled his rimless nose glasses at the end of their black silk cord.

"I fancy," he commented dryly, "that the lady already knows—and more. There are certain things in life that require two participants—such as crimes, quarrels, and intrigues. Miss Blucherne, the judge's son, St. John, recently experienced a highly pronounced case of Spanish influenza. I attended him. As you may know, delirium invariably arrives with a temperature of one hundred and five, and during delirium the patient—er—"

"Tells his right name," Graziello prompted with an encouraging smile.

"Precisely!" agreed the doctor. "Or words to that effect. The delirious

rave over the sensations and impressions that are most on their minds. What I failed to learn about young St. John Balmoral's relations with you are certainly not sufficient to arouse any curiosity. I was, I must confess, considerably shocked. Montreal, we are all aware, is the widest-open town on this continent north of Buenos Aires, and a respectable young man is scarcely safe on the streets. You met young St. John, I gathered from his delirium, at—"

"Carelli's," prompted Graziello sweetly. "They have excellent spaghetti. We were introduced—by vaudeville performers."

"Quite so! Quite so!" continued the doctor languidly as if reporting his observations of a recently excavated appendix. "I suppose so, Miss Blucherne. I learned everything that has taken place since that meeting. The taxicab bills must have given some adding machine a headache. I was pained—shocked. Young Mr. St. John has been kept very secluded. It has been his father's greatest hope that he grow to manhood with something of the old Puritan qualities. There is—I trust his worship will pardon my mentioning—a wild strain in the blood that only too easily becomes aggravated. I rather feared telling his father. I knew it would be a terrific blow—but rumors are now becoming gossip, from the clubs to the cheap grillrooms. Your exploits at the Black Cat and other rendezvous of night-life habitués have become scandal of an impetus to be painfully aggravating to the judge. I felt it my bounden duty, much as I dreaded the step, to inform him of what he had only an inkling of."

"What do you propose doing?" inquired Graziello languidly, cat-eying the judge with suspicion.

"I have spoken to my son," Balmoral declared with emotion. "He refuses to give you up. The young scamp is

actually infatuated. I have locked him in his room, but he swears that he will take his life if I keep him longer from you. He is only seventeen, you know. My God! When I consider what he was before you came into his life! I can do nothing with him. You are my last recourse. Graziello Blucherne, you must give him up."

"And if I refuse—what then?"

"I will sue you for seduction."

"What?" gasped Graziello, sitting bolt upright, her eyes startled. "Oh, judge! This is too rich!"

A trickle of asinine laughter rippled from Malcolm McGarr. He leaned forward, rubbing his moist palms in all the enthusiasm of a shyster lawyer with new victims ready for plucking.

"Divine!" he cackled, his voice breaking under its excess load of emotion. "Absolutely original! Egad, I hope you do it! There's a case worthy of my mettle! George, wouldn't I shine in the defense! Why, it'd be the making of me!"

"You will not be so enthusiastic when I get through with you," warned Mr. Justice Balmoral, fastening a terrible glare on Barrister McGarr. "You will never handle the case, you whippersnapper! I am a man of powerful influence in this community. I am going to rip the lid off Montreal's underworld, and if you are not in the toils when the case comes to assizes, it will be because you are in the Northwest Territories, and the Royal Mounted Police have not caught you because they are all in France."

Lawyer McGarr stared stupidly at Balmoral as if he were rolling over in his mind and examining something he refused to believe.

"What's the joke, judge?" he demanded uneasily. "What are you getting at? Of course you're only jesting about suing my client for—on the charge you mentioned."

"I have about as much sense of

humor, let alone when St. John's welfare is concerned," snapped the justice, "as that walking stick of yours. You should know that by now; you've been in my court enough. I most certainly am going through with it! Graziello Blucherne gives up my son completely—never sees or speaks to him again—or I appear in court against her."

"But it's never been done!" gasped Graziello, trembling between mirth and amazement. "Who ever heard of such a thing?"

"They're going to hear fast enough, I can warrant that," the judge announced emphatically. "If my son were a girl and you a man, there'd be case enough. What, after all, is the difference, since you women demand equal rights and equal responsibilities? Are not laws fundamentally for the purpose of maintaining justice and morality? Just because no other woman has ever been brought to the bar to answer for ruining a man's life is no sign I won't do it. The novelty of the case, I will admit—and agree there with this jackal of the courts—is tremendous. Obstacles are encountered at the start. But if I go after you, I'll get you. Your final opportunity—do you or do you not promise to break with my son?"

Graziello was on her feet with the swiftness of a lynx, her eyes sparkling fire. Rapidly she glided to the fireplace, turned and spatted her dainty palms together so vehemently that it seemed the slender wrists must snap. As one's eyes traveled from her rose-petal cheeks to her dainty ankles, the predicament of young St. John Balmoral was easily understood.

"*Sacri!*" she burst forth. "How I hate you! But I can fight! Enough, now, have you molested me! As for the boy—bah, I will marry him! You hear that?" She advanced until she stood close to Justice Balmoral, her bosom heaving, peering up into his eyes

and snapping her fingers in his face. "Do you hear me? I will marry him!"

"A woman like you?" parried the judge with biting contempt. "Take a person like you into my home as my daughter? You amuse me!"

She bent forward and retreated, like a panther approached too close to a fire. Warm blood of passion flushed up from her bodice to the roots of her dark hair.

"So!" she cried angrily. "You taunt me! You bring me here to een-sult me? Eh? *Tres bien!* We fight! How about it, Mr. Lawyer Man?"

McGarr ran long, trembling fingers through his straggly, faded hair.

"Do you retain me as your barrister in this case?" he inquired in a professional fashion.

Graziello flipped a coin into his lap.

"You're engaged," she assured him rapidly. "That's the retaining fee."

Lawyer McGarr rose and began strutting the length of the soft Chien Lung rug with a show of importance, throwing back his shoulders every few steps, his hands clasping and unclasping nervously behind him.

"Now to business!" he cackled delightedly. "Mr. Justice Balmoral, let us assume you bring your suit to trial. You must prove that certain relations have ex-

isted between your son and the defendant. What could you offer in the manner of direct legal evidence?"

The judge motioned toward the doctor.

"What he heard."

"Exhibit number one," purred Lawyer McGarr, pulsating with excitement. "Is it possible, judge, that you forget your law? A priest cannot offer as evidence anything he learns in the confessional. Nor can a lawyer divulge information he hears from a client in his capacity as legal adviser."

Mr. Justice Balmoral appeared to



Graziello had lighted a perfumed cigarette. One foot crept from beneath her gown; she extended it a trifle and studied the champagne silk stockings.

catch McGarr's drift. He frowned, chagrined, and bit his upper lip.

"The penal code," added the lawyer triumphantly, "both in Canada and the States, provides that a person duly authorized to practice physic or surgery shall not be allowed to disclose any information which he acquired in attending a patient in a professional capacity. My dear judge, your good family physician cannot testify as to what he heard from your son in delirium while the patient was at temperature one hundred and five."

The judge gestured exasperatedly.

"Confound your infernal trade!" he fumed irritably. "But Doctor Laughlin is not the only source of evidence. I can find others. And when a jury see my poor young son—"

"Bah!" interrupted Graziello, affecting a yawn. "He will not testify against me. I will answer for that."

"Don't be so sure," warned the justice. "And even if he persists in his loyalty—well, as I said, I can uncover witnesses. And, mark you, you live in the Province of Quebec. The Napoleonic criminal code is in effect here—you are assumed guilty until you prove yourself innocent."

Graziello had returned to her chair. She lounged back comfortably and laughed—a long, musical laugh.

"I am willing to stake my reputation," she taunted. "It will be worth it. Your harshness in dealing with women who appear before you has long been the shame of the island. You, who have never shown mercy, will get none. I will drag your good name in the dirt. And now I tell you, Mr. Justice Armand Balmoral, it is because I despise you, because you have interfered too often with plans of friends of mine, that I have done this."

"Careful!" warned Lawyer McGarr cautiously. "Remember, you are talking before witnesses."

"A fig for witnesses!" stormed the

lovely lady in the chair. "I can see my words cut into the judge's quartz heart like acid. I tell you, deliberately I planned this. All my skill and cunning, I put into winding this son of yours around my finger. First it was to break your heart. Then I saw the opportunity in money. Blackmail? *Non!* Just recompense, compensation for a woman's broken heart. I saw that opportunity. Did I consider it? That you cannot prove. Now it is more—the opportunity to cover your reputation, your family name, with filth. If you do not sue me, I will sue the boy. It is now I, Graziello Blucherne, who hold the whip hand. And after I am through, you will pay for your son's escapade—pay money until you writhe."

Beneath Armand Balmoral's studied external placidity was a seldom-disclosed whirlpool of Latin impulsiveness and blind emotion. Had Graziello known of his early reputation in northern Quebec, she might have hesitated at arousing him.

The judge had retreated under her goads. He sidestepped, bent his body forward, the tips of his fingers on the black carved-wood Chinese table. His face had gone so white that there was apparently no point where the Silver Fox's hair began. He had suddenly assumed the expression of a fox—brutal, cunning, relentless. His cheek muscles writhed, then knotted and froze. His eyes smoldered like expiring fires. The room became very silent. Out in the corridor a clock ticked loudly. The Java sparrows chirped unconcernedly. Graziello had recoiled in her chair, her eyes apprehensive.

With a slow, deliberate movement, Mr. Justice Balmoral's right hand crept down and mechanically opened a drawer. It came forth holding a blue-black automatic pistol. Graziello gasped, endeavored to scream—failed. Only a gurgle came from her throat.

The lawyer watched in a trancelike state of fascination.

"My God, judge!" cried the physician, and leaped forward, clutching Balmoral's wrist.

The action was like a dash of cold water. The judge stared at the doctor, then stupidly regarded the pistol. He dropped it into the drawer with a thud and tottered back into a chair, shuddering, registering horror by a warding-off hand and averted face.

The corridor clock seemed ticking faster now and the Java sparrows were silent—as if they had caught the tense spell of the situation.

The doctor leaned over and whispered for several minutes to the white-haired figure huddled defeatedly in the chair. Gradually Balmoral appeared to comprehend something vast. He lifted his face to the physician, his eyes wondering, doubtful. Then, in a flash, something seemed to come over him. He rose briskly and lit a cigarette.

"That puts a new angle on proceedings," he declared gracefully. "Graziello Blucherne, you have a child."

"I have," defiantly.

"A baby girl."

"Yes."

"About eight years old."

"Yes."

"Having several scandals in your past, you did not want her ever to know of her mother."

"Naturally—not."

"So you placed her in the care of the Gray Nuns."

"Yes-s-s," slowly.

"You love the little girl?"

"I am a mother." She said it simply.

"The sisters allow you to see the

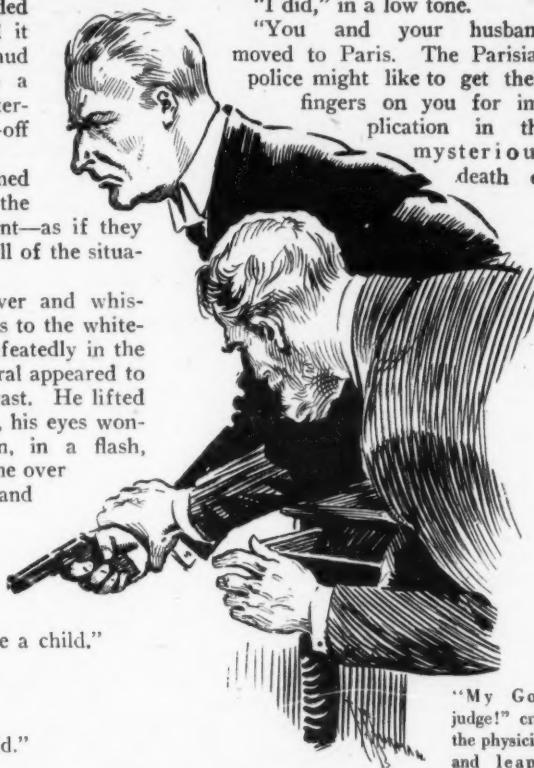
child frequently, without her knowing who you are."

"Yes, sir," meekly; the first time she had added, "sir."

"Graziello Blucherne, you married a Frenchman—became a French subject by that marriage."

"I did," in a low tone.

"You and your husband moved to Paris. The Parisian police might like to get their fingers on you for implication in the mysterious death of



"My God, judge!" cried the physician, and leaped forward, clutching Balmoral's wrist.

the man whose name you took. You fled through Spain and came here."

"The case has been nolled, from insufficient evidence—and I was innocent. My husband committed suicide," Graziello declared rapidly, with much earnestness, as if anxious to be believed. "Otherwise, they would have extradited me long ago."

"Nevertheless, you would not care to step foot again in France? There might be people there who would take the law into their own hands."

Graziello bit her lip.

"You are still a French subject," pursued Mr. Justice Balmoral. "You can never be repatriated to British citizenship. You realize, of course, that as a justice and as a member of the immigration board for the Dominion, I can order your deportation as an undesirable alien—at any time? I can place you under arrest at this very moment, detain you pending the arrival of a constable, then have you held incommunicado until you are deported."

"Oh, sweet Mary!" gasped Graziello, horrified. "The little girl, my angel—I could not bear being parted! If you only allow me to stay, I will leave the province at once—and maybe I can get the baby transferred to a convent farther west."

"You know my price!" Mr. Justice Balmoral spoke harshly.

"I will give him up," yielded Graziello with haste. "Never again will I see St. John. Your son will leave my life for all time. I swear it, as I am a mother."

"Your word," informed Balmoral brutally, "or even your oath, is not worth an inch of ash from a cigarette with me. Are you prepared to sign a release? I have it ready for you."

Stunned, she signed. The document, properly witnessed, released young St. John Balmoral, without reservation, from any legal action for desertion, breach of promise, or common-law claim. A faint smile playing about his lips was the only revelation of the jus-

tice's elation, but the doctor briskly rubbed his palms in high glee.

The Ojibwa Indian valet escorted them downstairs, the lawyer scratching his head disappointedly, Graziello only too anxious to escape.

The justice and his physician stood at the window and looked down at the two fur-coated figures hurrying along the driveway toward their waiting sleigh. They piled in precipitately, and through the night rang the musical jingle of Montreal sleigh bells. Far below sparkled the lights of the island city, and off in the distance, under a cold moon in a clear sky, reared the towers of Notre Dame Cathedral.

"Excellent work!" chuckled the doctor as they mixed highballs. "Your acting there, at the point where you drew the pistol, was really superb. It all went off like clockwork, just as you outlined it to me earlier in the evening."

Mr. Justice Armand Balmoral held his glass to the light and smiled cynically at the amberine fluid.

"Yes," he nodded reflectively, "possibly a trifle too melodramatic, but the woman is blasé and I had to work up to a certain tension to get her emotionally where I wanted her. The novelty of the suit I proposed almost disarmed her at the start. When that young scamp of a St. John came to me Friday night and confessed he was in deep with this woman, I was afraid it might cost us a pretty figure to silence her. All around, it was a good piece of business—a fine night's work—considering the thermometer outside."

"Or," said the physician, "considering temperature one hundred and five."



Stars and Near-Stars That Have Lighted the New York Stage the Past Season



From a portrait, copyright, Strauss-Peyton

JEANNE EAGELS

The charming oldest orphan in "Daddies," the Belasco comedy success.



HELEN HAYES

is the girl who has played with such charm and spirit the rôle of the artist's might-have-been daughter in "Dear Brutus." From childhood she has been on the stage, but she was really "discovered" by Lew Fields, with whom she appeared in "Old Dutch." A little later, Charles Frohman engaged her for the juvenile in "The Prodigal Husband," with John Drew. Then followed her appearance in "Penrod," and a season as "Pollyanna," touring the Pacific coast. She has been called "the Apriliest actress." Her success in "Dear Brutus" has been one of the most notable of the year.



LOLA FISHER

This sympathetic young actress has, through her interpretations of the leading rôles in "Good Gracious, Annabelle," and "Be Calm, Camilla," become closely identified with the altogether different humor of the clever Clare Kummer. A native of Chicago, Miss Fisher started to become an artist, but suddenly branched off to the stage. A training in stock followed, after which she had small parts in plays with Zelda Sears, Francis Wilson, and others. The plays all failed, but Miss Fisher stuck. In "Under Cover" she spent almost an entire season. Then came a part in "Our Mrs. McChesney," and the rôle of the heroine in "Rio Grande."



TESSA COSTA

is the little prima donna of "The Royal Vagabond," singing and dancing her way to success as the sad, sweet heroine for whom the *Crown Prince of Bargavia* renounces his throne. She is a Chicago girl, and went on the stage in a road company of "Madame Sherry." Broadway first saw her as ingénue with Raymond Hitchcock in "The Beauty Shop," and last season she attracted attention as the singing slave girl of "Chu Chin Chow." Miss Costa is a lyric soprano of much promise. She was studying for grand opera when she was tempted by the novelty of opera à la George M. Cohan.



PHOEBE HUNT

who appeared in the leading feminine rôle of George M. Cohan's "A Prince There Was," is a young Californian who went on the stage after several years' experience in amateur theatricals. She played leading rôles in stock for a season in Seattle, then was brought on from the coast in "Broken Threads," a melodrama which had a brief run. In the Cohan comedy, "A Prince There Was," Miss Hunt played the rôle of a woman authoress, revealing a splendid intelligence and sense of humor.



PEGGY HOPKINS

Noted for her beauty and dashing style, Miss Hopkins was originally a Ziegfeld "Follies" light. Then she became one of the Winter Garden's famous galaxy of beauties. As the daring, independent rich girl in "A Place in the Sun," put on by Cyril Harcourt, she had her first "regular" part in a successful play. This was followed by the leading rôle in "A Sleepless Night," a bedroom farce with a comparatively brief run.



INA CLAIRE

The good fairies handed brains as well as beauty to Ina Claire. By way of vaudeville, her extremely clever imitations, and the "Follies," she reached the legitimate stage. It was her work in the "Follies" that attracted the attention of David Belasco, who picked her for "Polly with a Past," a comedy by George Middleton and Guy Bolton. As *Polly*, she took New York by storm, and the play made an instant hit. After two continuous seasons in "Polly," Miss Claire is resting in the mountains, preparatory to her appearance in a new Belasco production this fall.



LENORE ULRIC

An actress who has achieved high distinction in "Tiger Rose," that brisk, romantic melodrama of the Northwest, written by Willard Mack, and produced by David Belasco. Much of the play's success was due to Miss Ulric's impersonation of the heroine—a half-wild, French-Canadian girl. In "The Blue Paradise" she first attracted the attention of New Yorkers. Possessed of a beautiful speaking voice, temperament, and striking, dark beauty, this young actress, equipped with a Belasco training, can look forward to a future full of promise.



EILEEN HUBAN

Few young women of the stage have had a swifter rise to prominence than Miss Huban, who created the leading feminine rôle in David Belasco's production of the Irish comedy, "Dark Rosaleen." Born in rural Ireland and educated in a convent, Miss Huban had never been inside a theater until she came to America some four years ago. She met Whitford Kane when she sang at an Irish pageant, and he gave her a small part in one of his plays. Although she appeared in several pieces that were failures, her own work left a deep impression on all who saw it. In "Dark Rosaleen" she undoubtedly "arrived."



VIOLET HEMING

is an English beauty—a pure Anglo-Saxon type—who comes of a theatrical family in England. Charles Frohman brought her to this country, when she was a mere slip of a girl, to play *Wendy* to Maude Adams' *Peter Pan*, and here she has remained practically ever since, being leading woman with Albert Chevalier, James K. Hackett, George Arliss, and other stars. Recent years have seen her in "Under Fire," "Under Cover," "The Flame," and "Losing Eloise." In the season's phenomenally successful mystery play, "Three Faces East," Miss Heming was the lovely blond heroine in a rôle that demanded an unusual amount of histrionic skill.



EVELYN GOSNELL

is another beautiful blonde, the "pale gold girl" of that tremendously successful farce, "Up in Mabel's Room." A year ago, Broadway had never heard of her. She is twenty-three years old, and was born in Stockholm, Sweden. After only three months on the stage, playing with a Waterbury, Connecticut, stock company, she signed up with A. H. Woods for the rôle of the meddling wife who would regulate the lives of others in "Up in Mabel's Room." Her instant success is being quoted by those who believe that "Actresses are born, not made." At any rate, she has performed a feat that is unique.



HELEN MENKEN

In "Three Wise Fools," Miss Menken has distinguished herself as an emotional actress. Although one of the youngest leading women on Broadway, she is a veteran in years of service to the stage. At the age of six, she made her débüt with Annie Russell in "Midsummer Night's Dream." At ten she was dancing with Adeline Genée, in "The Silver Star," playing a boy in the first act and a dwarf in the third. At fourteen she played a woman of forty for an entire season in vaudeville. Since then she has appeared in "Too Many Cooks," "Sinners," "Pendennis," and "Parlor, Bedroom, and Bath."



GRACE FISHER

is the Princess Charming, and one of the radiant beauties of "The Royal Vagabond," that supremely successful and delightful "Cohanized opera comique." She is a conventionally bred girl, gifted with a beautiful voice, temperament, and beauty over which artists rave. Her hair is a wonderful combination of gold and copper, her eyes a fascinating reddish-brown, and her two dimples—shades of Hades! Vaudeville, the Winter Garden, and the prima-donna rôle in "The Love Mill," was the sum of her stage experience until the astute George M. Cohan picked her for the *Princess Helena* in his "Royal Vagabond"—a rôle that she greatly adorns.



JULIA BALLEW

Young and winsome, of the dainty, ingénue type, Miss Ballew is pleasing audiences in "The Gaieties of 1919," staged by the Shuberts. On the roof of the Century Theater, in the "Century Midnight Whirl," where she led a popular song hit, "Throw 'Em In," Miss Ballew attracted attention to her charming self. She began her stage life as a chorus girl, but from the first it was safe enough to predict that she wouldn't stay there long.



CONSTANCE BINNEY

Not yet twenty, this young actress enjoys the distinction of having jumped overnight into the leading rôle of a Broadway production, without previously having played a speaking part. She is the heroine, *Penelope Penn*, in "39 East." Beginning her career as a dancer in "Oh, Lady, Lady!", followed by an engagement in Ziegfeld's "Midnight Frolic," and posing between stage appearances before the motion-picture camera, Miss Binney has landed squarely as a charming actress to be heard from later.



BEATRICE NICHOLS

who plays *Millie*, the adopted daughter of *Bill Jones*, in "Lightnin'" is a native of Boston, and her training for the stage was obtained at the famous Castle Square Stock Company. It was there that Oliver Morosco happened to see her, and offered her an engagement at his California theater. For three seasons she played important rôles that had been created by Billie Burke, Maude Adams, Laurette Taylor, and others. And when Mr. Morosco sent a company to tour Australia, Miss Nichols was chosen as the leading woman. Upon her return to this country she was selected, most happily, for the leading ingénue rôle in "Lightnin'."

Her Own Price

By Winona Godfrey

Author of "Adele, Ltd.," "The Precious Hour," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

"Oh, wasteful woman, she who may
On her sweet self set her own price,
Knowing he cannot choose but pay,
How she has cheapened paradise!"

BEHIND the chaste signature of "Hortense, Importer," in gold letters on plate glass, the display of a single ultrasmart hat bespoke the exclusiveness of the shop. This hat was really from Paris, but the very smartest of Hortense's hats were imported simply from a tiny chaos of dissected and reassembled *chapeaux* called a workshop, just back of this elegant little showroom.

A smart young woman, accompanied by a smart young man, descended from a smart machine and smartly entered the smart shop of Hortense, Importer. It was late in the afternoon, and the shop was empty save for the salesgirl who advanced to meet them. The smart young woman placed herself before a mirror, and the young man, drawing up a spindly gilt chair, sat near.

The salesgirl, whose name was Vivien Andrews, selected a hat and set it carefully on the customer's marcelled head.

"This is very pretty." The stock phrase was spoken in a clear contralto, and she stood aside to let the wearer study the effect for herself.

The latter poised her head coquettishly.

"Do you like it, Clive?"

Clive pulled his eyes from Vivien Andrews' face.

"Very pretty. Very becoming."

His glance swept the hat and returned to the face.

It was not exactly a beautiful or a vivacious face, but very intelligent. She smiled, but it was not a very merry smile. It had something of the absent-minded, mechanical pleasantness of the saleswoman. Her long gray eyes looked at you directly. Her dark hair was done very modishly, and her dark dress was of that extremely fashionable—or fashionably extreme—cut invariably worn by the girls in such shops. Still, it was not a face usually seen above such a gown. It was not, perhaps, wholly unsophisticated, but neither was it hard, blasé, shallow, or challenging.

She seldom looked at the escorts of her customers—frequently inclined to stare—but she felt Clive's eyes and, half against her will, her own met them. For a second her grave gaze clung. Then the young woman spoke. She liked the hat, only she wanted this buckle off and a flower put on here, just so.

"Would you see to it, Miss——"

"Andrews. Yes, I'll see to it." And she would surely have it sent by eight o'clock to Miss Edith Cunningham, 90 Riverside Drive.

"Surely by eight," Miss Cunningham cautioned.

"Yes, madam," promised Miss Andrews.



The young man turned, hat in hand, eyes still seeking the girl with Edith's new hat in her hand. "Good-by," he said.

The young man followed Miss Cunningham to the door and turned there, hat in hand, eyes still seeking the girl with Edith's new hat in her hand.

"Good-by," he said.

And she, with a grave little nod:

"Good-by."

How queer of him to do that!

"Oh, he doesn't mean good-by. He just means au revoir," said the hard,

but not ill-natured voice of "Hortense," whose letters were addressed to "Miss H. Lippman," and who was a more or less accurate social register of the class who had money enough to indulge in her headgear.

"You know him?" smiled Vivien Andrews.

"I know 'em all," Hortense averred. "That's William Clive Sargent, Third,



and Edith Cunningham. She's got a good three million in her own right, and his business is being the son of his father. But I hear the old gentleman is on his last legs financially, so Third will have to change his business from being a rich man's son to being a rich woman's husband." Hortense shrugged cynically. "Have Letty fix that hat, Vivien. I want it right. Miss Cunningham will be just as good a customer when she's Mrs. Sargent."

Vivien, listening, thought Hortense a little harsh—Clive looked so likable—and then suddenly became aware of

whom he reminded her. Her father. In just what way she did not know—the type, perhaps. No other comparison could have been more disillusioning. Handsome, lazy, merry, good-for-nothing, he had won her mother's heart and made her life one long, drudging struggle with poverty and incapacity. Vivien had loved him sometimes, respected him never. Her mother always excused him:

"You know, he never had to consider *anything* when he was a boy—your grandfather was so well fixed—and it's so hard to get in and dig when you've not been brought up that way."

The narrowness of her life turned the girl to a world of dreams. The stage-struck phase that most girls pass through became in Vivien an urge to the necessary profession. And she coupled the glamour of the theater with the desire to live *deeply*, with all the youthful illusions as to where and what living deeply is.

So, after incredible economies, New York. A year of semi-starvation, of incessant seeking; the breaking uncertainty of waiting; at last the scantiest foothold, to which she clung briefly only to discover that her talent was an appreciation of art rather than the power of expression. She had intelligence, but not genius. With money or "pull" or the disposition to intrigue, she might have attained a respectable position. With that intelligence and the new wisdom of disillusion, she saw just what the future offered. And the present was a blank. So, from the dream of romance and fame, she woke to the

reality of selling hats for Hortense. Not yet wholly healed of the apathy of defeat, she was like a runner after the first race, recovering breath and energy and plan for the second.

She kept thinking of Sargent and the way he had looked at her—for no reason. But there had been something singularly—what?—well, magnetic—in his eyes, some message in that uncalled-for good-by. She never expected to see him again, of course. And she scorned him and all his kind.

The next night she had walked a block from the shop when it began to rain. She hesitated, not knowing whether to run on or to go back. Some one put an umbrella over her head—Sargent, grave, courteous, lifting his hat.

"Allow me, Miss Andrews."

She was astounded, so astounded that it was a second before she could find her voice to say:

"Oh, I—really—Don't bother."

"A pleasure, I assure you," said he, and they walked on under the umbrella. "I was with Miss Cunningham yesterday. Remember?"

It was obvious that she remembered.

"Won't you let us be friends? I don't know of any way to be ceremoniously introduced, but I wish to know you—very much. I'm Clive Sargent—"

"Yes, I know."

"Oh, you know? And you'll be friends?"

"I'm afraid not."

"But you misunderstand. Because we have no mutual friends through whom we might meet more conventionally—"

"That is an excellent reason for not meeting at all. I have no desire to meet you either conventionally or otherwise, Mr. Sargent."

He was surprised, not accustomed to rebuffs.

"That certainly ought to finish me

off," he grinned. "Has somebody been painting you a lurid picture? I'm not a bad sort, really. Try me."

"Why should I?"

"Well, there's that," he agreed, amused. "Why should you? But then, again, why shouldn't you? I don't know just why you interested me so yesterday. But you did. Something, I don't know what—in your eyes—You won't believe me, but I've been thinking about you ever since, and—I had an irresistible impulse to—look again—"

"Thank you, but I am not interested." She was a little frightened, not of him, but because there was something in his walking there beside her that filled her with an amazing exultation that would not be abashed, a sudden comforting companionship that eased her loneliness and soothed her bruised pride. She did not answer when he spoke again, and they walked on in silence, the rain pat-patting on the umbrella which he held over her.

Her boarding house was within a half-dozen blocks of the shop, and Sargent walked with her to the door. She should have walked in without deigning him a glance, but—she paused. She did not look at him, but he was looking intently at her.

"Do you forgive me?" he asked, not at all desperately, yet not too lightly.

"No."

He was not demolished.

"What is your first name?" This seemed somehow to be quivering with importance.

Her answer should have been a toss of the head, the door closed firmly in his face. She had intended to do that. Instead—her eyes met his questioning ones, her disobedient lips murmured, "Vivien."

She reached her room, breathless, cheeks burning, eyes shining, in high spirits! Surely nothing had happened to be set up about. Rather, she should

be shamed. She tried to be, but something singing in her heart would not be silenced or rebuked.

Vivien, however, was of the sort who face things. A man like Clive Sargent could only amuse himself with a girl like her. Nothing good could come of acquaintance with him. She must never see him again.

In the morning, lilies-of-the-valley and a note:

Please dine with me to-night. I must explain.

W. C. S.

She told the messenger to tell the gentleman "no." She was firm about it. That was the end of *that*. And still there had been something in it that warmed her. She could not help being flattered by the mere fact of having attracted even the momentary attention of a Clive Sargent.

At ten minutes to six o'clock, his car drew up before the shop, to the extreme interest of everybody therein. Hortense, recognizing the gentleman, smiled a knowing smile and said significantly:

"You may go, Vivien."

Vivien, rather white, instead of red, said thank you, but there was no reason for her going before the usual time.

He did not come in; he just sat there—waiting. Vivien waited, too, with mixed emotion—anger, a little fright, a little excitement, a little—yes, just a little—triumph. Someway she knew that there was no use in trying to outwait him, so at six o'clock she put on her wraps as usual and went out.

She meant to hurry by, not seeing him, but he was instantly at her side. She stopped, just looking at him without greeting.

"I thought you might—I wanted to give you an opportunity to reconsider." His tone was eager, not too eager, a little amused. He waited, bareheaded.

She wanted to go with him, desperately. Why couldn't it be all right for

her to go—to climb into the beautiful car, to be whisked to some charming little restaurant—lights and music—and Clive Sargent sitting opposite with that quizzically adoring—yes, adoring—look in his eyes? Oh, the perversity of things, when it was wrong to do that and right to go home to a boarding-house table, uninteresting people, dreary rooms! And this was boiled-beef night, creamed onions, tapioca pudding—Street lights twinkled out, motors darted to and fro, the air suddenly grew a trifle crisper. His dashing car waited—his dashing self—waited—

"Oh, come!" he pleaded. "Where's the harm? You want to, don't you now, really? And I want you to. Please!"

And without having said a word, she turned and let him help her into that luxurious waiting car. He just said, "Thank you," and climbed in beside her. Was there any special place she'd like to go?

"No."

They sped up the Avenue, along the river, to just the charming, quiet place she had pictured. There were only a few there, because it was so early, but these few regarded them with languid interest—Vivien Andrews, in her fashionably extreme gown that was only a trifle shopworn, in two meanings, with hat by Hortense—and Clive Sargent, Third.

He ordered the dinner and then looked at her so intently that her eyes fell.

"I could hardly credit my memory," he said, "but it was quite right. You are beautiful."

"Nothing of the sort," she denied. "And please don't."

"And different," he went on with a self-congratulatory sigh, "actually different! I never saw but two women who didn't smirk when told they were beautiful. You're one, and I don't be-

lieve there was another one. And please be happy. Won't you try?"

She could without trying. She was really dismayed to find how easily she could be happy. The dinner was wonderful, and there were flowers and music and beautiful women and jewels. It was intoxicating even if one drank no wine. Vivien did not drink any, and so Clive did not.

They became able to talk to each other; not personalities again, just gay little talk that good friends talk. And they danced, and it was all as food and drink to the famished to Vivien. She did not let herself ask how she came to be there. Finally they drove along the river in the sweet night wind, not saying much. When she suggested, "We'd better go home now," he turned without protest.

At the door: "Will you have luncheon with me to-morrow? Please."

"No—no. You mustn't ask me."

"Weren't we happy to-night? Where's the harm?"

"Better not," she murmured.

He took her hands.

"Vivien, you don't dislike me as you did at first? Vivien—" She did not turn her head away, and his lips pressed hers, softly, tenderly. People were coming down the street.

She ran up the stairs, burst into her room, and threw herself on the bed. A sterner inner self shouted above her whirling senses. Could this sudden, tumultuous thing be love? Her dream of love had meant trust, peace, protection, but just now she had been moved by a force greater than her judgment or her pride. She had let him kiss her! He would never believe now in her fineness. He would think she was in the habit of dining with strange men, of letting them kiss her. Faugh!

For a long time she lay there with a curious sense of fighting. The girls she knew would exclaim at her "catching" of Clive Sargent. They would giggle

how romantic it all was! She herself knew that it was not romantic; no, it was really just *cheap*. He held her cheaply. She had held herself cheaply.

Oh, wasteful woman, she who may

On her sweet self set her own price,

Knowing he cannot choose but pay,

How she has cheapened paradise!

How sold for naught her priceless gift,

How spoilt the bread and spilt the wine,

When spent with due respective thirst,

Had made brutes men and men divine!

It seemed as if the voice materialized in her ear—the mellow voice of Jane Carrington, fifty, getting fat, with bright gold hair and a wonderful skin and old, old eyes and a wise smile. She had been kind to Vivien during her brief stage career. They had been standing in the wings one day at a rehearsal watching pretty Lilly Ray, the ingénue, throwing herself with a very good aim at Alan Grandall's head.

And Jane: "I want to teach you a few wise lines, child."

And Vivien, somehow impressed, listening well, had learned them:

Oh, wasteful woman—

Clive did not love her. She was just an episode to him—just another episode, doubtless. Young men of his class have a penchant for sentimental adventures. For that matter, so have young women of various classes. Vivien was not one of them. And then if only she might have taken Clive at face value! If Hortense had not appraised him with such seeming shrewdness! She ought, though, to be grateful for that, for having been supplied with that knowledge of him. That was her weapon of defense—if she were not too silly to use it. She must not see him again; she repeated the formula of the night before. Or if she did—No, it would save a lot of complications if she did not see him again. But again, oh, why couldn't it have been *all right*? She could have liked him so much!



"I could hardly credit my memory," he said, "but it was quite right. You are beautiful."

The next morning she glanced at a paper and saw no more than a large-typed advertisement: "Cheap Things Are Too Cheap. It's Really Cheaper To Buy Good Things. Then You Have Something Worth Having."

Oh, wasteful woman, she who may
On her sweet self set her own price,
Knowing he cannot choose but pay—

No Clive Sargent that day, no notes, no flowers, that day or the next or the next. On the morning of the fourth day, Vivien made a little grimace at the shadowed eyes she saw in her mirror. The red mouth grinned gamely back,

though. She needn't have bothered about not seeing him again. He had had enough. Well, that was over.

But it wasn't.

When she came home to dinner, his car was waiting. He sprang out as she approached.

"How do you do?" he said gravely.

"How do you do?" she responded in the same tone.

"I thought I'd better come here than to the shop."

"Yes?"

"Jump in and let's have dinner somewhere. I've something to tell you."

"Sorry, but I've another engagement."

He was watching her closely.

"You mean you don't want to go with me."

"Exactly," she frankly admitted.

"Why?"

She merely lifted an eyebrow.

He smiled.

"I suppose you're huffed because I haven't been around the last few days."

"How complacent you are! Do you think I've lost flesh?"

"You didn't miss me, then?"

"Why should I? Mr. Sargent, hasn't it occurred to you that I might not be flattered by your—your brief attention? I can see it hasn't, however."

"I'm beginning to see that you weren't," he grinned.

"It was more humiliating than anything," she analyzed it calmly.

"By George, I admire your candor!"

"Oh, no, you don't. You hate it. You prefer the smirk."

He looked at her curiously.

"Well, I shall repay you in kind. I did not intend to see you again. It seemed—wiser not to. You made me forget myself the other night. I apologize for that. And I meant to stay away—"

"Well, aren't you a free agent?"

"I thought so, but it seems not."

"I don't understand."

"Would you believe me if I told you I was not in the habit of—scraping acquaintance with—"

"Girls in millinery shops? Certainly not."

"You have a poor opinion of me, haven't you?"

"And you of me," she said in a low voice.

"I believe I'm in love with you," he declared with a sort of surprised concern.

"How absurd that would be for you!" she observed with no concern at all.

"Doesn't it interest you a bit?" he demanded.

"Oh, very much, of course," politely.

"You think I'm not serious."

"I'm sure you're not. And that's always been the trouble, hasn't it? People think you're serious when you're not."

"Vivien—"

"Miss Andrews, if you please, Mr. Sargent. I know I'm only a poor milliner's girl, but—"

He laughed.

"Adorable, irresistible, poor milliner's girl, won't you step into my little Stutz—"

"Thank you, but walking's much healthier for poor milliner's girls. And won't you please stay away from Hortense's and also from my boarding house, and greatly oblige—"

"Devotedly yours," said he. "Am I that dangerous?"

"Oh, not nearly so dangerous as you think—just bothersome."

"I like that!" But he did not go on in the same vein. "You're right. I'd better stay away. You're quite right. I wish we could be friends—but—Good-by." He put out his hand. She knew better now than to put hers into it. She just said, "Good-by," lightly, and ran on up the steps, closing the door behind her without looking back.

A week passed. She kept thinking of him, sometimes deliberately, sometimes against her will. She would not admit that she was in love with him, yet knew well enough that she was. Sometimes she called him back with all the strength of her loneliness and longing; sometimes she thanked fate for saving her from herself and him. And then, just when she was sure that she must see him again or die, he came walking to meet her.

This time they did not speak any greeting; they just looked at each other. He turned and walked with her.

"Oh, it isn't a lucky accident," he

said at last. "I did it quite deliberately."

"I thought we said good-by," she returned.

"I used to read about this and wonder," he sighed. "It used to amuse me."

"What?"

"Why, a man not being able to stay away from a certain girl. Believe me, I fully intended to stay away from you."

"And I frankly invited you to, if I remember correctly."

"You did. But there was something in your eyes just now— Vivien, you're with me all the time. I can't get away from you, from your eyes, from your lips—and I can't help coming back to see if—if you're *real*. You know really I shouldn't fall in love with you."

"Because you're going to marry Edith Cunningham."

"How did you know?"

"Well—I know."

He did not deny it. He looked grave, a little puzzled. Then, without preamble:

"It's Saturday. Give me this afternoon. Let's go to the country—have a picnic. What do you say?"

She hesitated, then nodded her head thoughtfully.

"On one condition. You can guess it. Do you promise?"

"I promise."

It was one of those days that hang like a jewel on the monotonous chain of every day. It is compensation for dreary years to remember, "I've had *that day*. Whatever happens I've had *that day*." The swift ride in the sunshine—luncheon by a clear brook's edge—wonderful talk—gaiety born of a bubbling happiness, born in turn of this sweet companionship, the glad content of mere nearness.

He kept his promise, spoke no word of love, but what need of that when

every bird call sang it, every brook ripple crooned it, when they were bathed in its very sunshine? "I love you," would have been sweet, but it was superfluous. They drew about them the cozy curtain of Now. In all of which I am not claiming that they were at all original.

During the ride home in the velvet dusk—heaven hanging out the first stars like love lanterns, the warm wind touching their faces with the cool fragrance of the fields—the silence between them was more poignant than whispered words; it confessed, while their lips were sealed.

At her door they said just, "Good night," feeling the warm present ghost of that other kiss; "Good night," leaving all analysis to—to-morrow.

Vivien locked her door. Her eyes were shining, but her mouth was set. She began to pack her trunk.

It is not difficult to disappear in New York. Put your trunk on a passing taxi, don't leave a forwarding address, seek a new neighborhood a few miles away, and if you've carefully paid your bills, it will take a long time to find you. But you can be found—if any one cares enough to look for you.

Vivien found a place in a tiny shop in the Hundred and Fifties, which paid enough to live on—no, to exist on. But she existed carefully, ate carefully, exercised in the mornings, walked in the evenings, guarded her complexion, for New York is hard on complexions. Only exquisite things bring high prices, things shopworn or misused must be marked down.

But there is nothing so terribly wearing as waiting—waiting that becomes indefinite, uncertain, perhaps futile. Summer came, hot days, breathless nights. Little devils inquired sardonically why she measured his love by her own.

"But if he really loved me," she agonized after the fashion of countless



He smiled. "I suppose you're huffed because I haven't been around the last few days."

millions of females, "he'd come! He'd give her up! He'd be different—for me!"

The world had not been so good to Vivien that she could reasonably expect dreams to come true. She clung desperately to hope, to the last pitiful faith of love in love, tried to be patient, tried again, and then shrugged her shoulders, and that shrug was characteristic of Vivien. When the ship sank, she did not dissolve into the water; she shrugged and stepped gamely into the life-boat. I say, she drew her twelve dollars and a half, packed her lean trunk, put on her hat, powdered her nose, and descended the cabbage-

scented stairs—just as Clive Sargent walked in at the front door.

An electric shock thrilled her to her toes, but her hand merely tightened on the sticky bannister.

"Why, hello!" she said, just sweetly friendly.

He strode over to the foot of the stairs.

"You diabolical child! For two cents I'd spank you—or kiss you to death! What are you trying to do, anyway?"

She lifted an eyebrow in that exasperating way.

"Have much trouble finding the place?"

"Not any more than it would take

to explore Africa. What did you do it for?"

"What did you do it for?" she inquired.

Behind their careless tones was something at white heat. He did not offer to touch her.

"I've—Edith and I have quit. That was what you wanted, wasn't it?"

"I?"

"You went away so that I could—see. Wasn't that it?"

She waited, not answering.

"I thought that was what you meant. After that gorgeous day, I knew you wouldn't just go." He paused, but still she did not speak. "I didn't know I could want anything so much. Vivien, will you marry me now?"

He would never know what it cost her to shake her head. He was obviously surprised.

"You won't? Why, all these weeks, I've thought of nothing but you—"

"Against your will," she reminded him gently. "You can't understand why I don't drop into your arms like a ripe and overjoyed plum, can you? You think you're condescending—"

"I don't analyze you. You don't care or you wouldn't be so—careful."

"Have I ever said I cared?"

"No—but you do. Vivien, I feel you do."

"But you just said I didn't!"

"Darling, you do, don't you?"

"That's just the difference between us, Clive. You think you must have what you want, because you've always had everything you wanted. Now I've never had much that I wanted—"

"What are you splitting all these hairs for? I've asked you to marry me. Is there any reason why you shouldn't?"

"Several. One look into the future, for instance. Your father knows that you have broken with Miss Cunningham, and is pleased?"

He laughed.

"Pleased? Well, I'd hardly say that."

"He expected Miss Cunningham's money to keep the Sargents from—caving in," she went on slowly.

He stared at her, his eyes growing cold.

"What do you know of the Sargents' affairs?"

"Only what everybody knows."

"It's the money, then, that interests you?"

"No—no. But the future—your future and mine. I'm thinking of it because—I do care so much." Her low voice broke.

"What is it you want, then?" he demanded hoarsely. "You know you can drive any bargain with me now."

"Yes, now," she whispered piteously. "Oh, Clive, I wish I were just a silly little fool! I wish love made me blind and deaf, too, so I couldn't see—Oh, don't you see what would happen if I married you? Your father's breaking, your fortune's almost gone. After the honeymoon, you'd think you'd paid too much for me. I want—your own independence. I don't care how little, so you're standing on your own feet. Don't you see what I mean? It's not for me, Clive; it's—"

"I'm not a good enough match, eh? Aren't you a little exacting, Miss Andrews?" He tried to put amusement into his angry voice.

"I know you thought it was you who were condescending," she said slowly. "If you hadn't a penny in the world, I'd come with you gladly."

"But as it is, you want me made over."

"Perhaps I'm wrong," she said, not quite steadily. "I know it's considered wholly admirable for a girl to go life blind. All the really popular heroines say, 'I don't care what you are or what I'm going to make of our lives—I love you and nothing else matters.' That doesn't seem to me to be so wonder-

ful; it just seems rather weak and silly—because it *does* matter. I'd rather give up a little moonshine and—have my lover a man."

"And you think I'm not one? I don't just get your argument, but I'm afraid you'll look rather far for perfection. If you loved me—"

"I'd count the world well lost, you think. It would be simpler. Unfortunately, I've had an example under my nose all my life, and I know people are alike. We are not really different—Oh, we don't understand each other, Clive, at all!"

Mrs. Kelly, the landlady, appeared at the top of the stairs, her dotted silk dress and ostrich-feathered hat proclaiming that she was stepping out. It came to Vivien suddenly how she had never had any place even to talk to Clive. They had always lingered on the sidewalk, in doorways, in musty hallways like this. She was humbled. It was rather absurd, after all, for her to be dictating to a young aristocrat like Clive, wasn't it?

Mrs. Kelly was sweeping downstairs, beaming on the handsome young man whose sport car she had observed from an upper window. It seemed to give him a cue.

"Well, good-by," he said. "Glad to see you looking so well." He opened the door for Mrs. Kelly, said good-by again politely, and closed it behind Mrs. Kelly—and himself, leaving behind him a surprised and disconcerted young woman.

She sat down limply on the bottom step. After all the waiting and hoping and despairing, after the brief triumph of his searching and finding, she had thrown away her little hour of happiness. What's the use of forethought, anyway, and exaction? Isn't it better to have that little hour of happiness than to have nothing? And who was she to demand so much? What had she to give? Only that magnificence,

herself! He had chosen her, a poor little not-brilliant nobody, when he might have had a much-sought heiress. And still Miss Nobody was not satisfied. She must have him remolded nearer some nebulous ideal. He had actually said, "Be my wife," and she—she, Vivien Andrews—had stopped to argue with him! "She who may on her sweet self set her own price," alas, making the mistake of overvaluation, "knowing he cannot choose but pay—" Can't he, though! And now she has lost her paradise! Oh, bungler, bungler, bungler!

She did not go back to Hortense's, for she wished to be asked no questions. After a while she was lucky enough to get a pretty good place with Adele, Ltd., and so dropped back into the old routine. She read of Edith Cunningham's engagement to a polo player, and felt a little relieved. At least he had not gone back to Edith.

Fall came. She was tired, had had no vacation. Mother was writing brave letters about affairs at home, the more heartrending because they were so brave.

"If your father had a little capital he could go in with Will Garson, who has invented a gas saver that promises big returns. He so wanted to get into something worth while. But you know he is so cheery always. I don't know what I'd do if he were easily depressed."

Oh, yes, Vivien knew very well—same old story. All her life, father had been turning down steady, poky jobs for the something *worth while* that was always going to, but never quite did, turn up. And sometimes she had wished he wouldn't be "quite so cheery always," when somebody else was doing the hard sledding. What, she wondered, did mother in her secret heart really think about it all? She had had her little hour of happiness—

The next day Vivien read that Wil-

liam Clive Sargent, Second, was bankrupt. It was her lunch hour, and she had picked up a paper in the hall of her boarding house. She sat thinking a while; then she did not go back to work—she went straight to the offices of W. C. Sargent.

Her experience of bankruptcy having been on a very small scale, she expected to find that the palatial office furniture had been carted away. Instead, she entered an office that appeared about as usual. In a small, but firm, voice she inquired of the office boy for young Mr. Sargent.

"I'll see if he's in. Name?"

"Miss Andrews."

She waited, feeling extremely unimportant. And yet, in a way, she was responsible. If it had not been for her, Edith Cunningham's money would have prevented this catastrophe. To think that all these desks and files and important papers and busy clerks and clicking typewriters had been influenced by *her!* Was it possible?

At the boy's nod, she entered the elegant room he indicated, as Clive walked in from another door whose opening disclosed a half-dozen men in grave discussion.

"Good morning," said Clive formally, though it was afternoon. "Won't you sit down?"

She murmured good morning, and sat down. He seemed a stranger, elegant, aloof. Could there ever have been anything between *them*? He was making it terribly hard for her.

"I shouldn't have come, I see. But I thought something—dreadful—had happened."

"Don't you call bankruptcy something dreadful?" he returned cheerfully. "Still, I don't see anything enticing in that to bring you."

"I see I shouldn't have come," she repeated meekly.

"This is a sinking ship." He seemed to agree with her. "Why board her?"

"Because I preferred being with you when the ship went down."

"I thought you were afraid the sea might get rough. Have you changed so much?"

"Perhaps."

"Vivien, when I asked you to marry me, I considered myself in an exalted position in which any girl should be delighted to join me. I had never detected those flaws in my fortunate self which you so carefully pointed out. I had drifted into a half engagement with Edith without consciously calculating that her money was going to ballast our family craft. Can you believe I had no idea how badly that craft needed ballast? It's a fact. Your frankness opened my eyes. That day I went from you to my father. We mutually confessed. We couldn't save this, but we're going to start over."

"I don't know how I—dared." Vivien marveled. "You—forgive me?"

Mr. Sargent knelt down by her chair.

"I'll think it over," he promised. "Preparatorily, I should like to ask you a few questions. Does your coming here to-day mean that, though you wouldn't marry me when I thought I had money, you didn't intend to cut me when I knew I hadn't any?"

"I suppose it does."

"You were afraid we—wouldn't be happy—"

"I was afraid you weren't coming back."

"You know," he cried, "you *knew* I had to come back—in the end! And you're not afraid now? You'll marry me soon?"

"Yes."

"We'll be happy," he promised.

Oh, she knew they would be happy, yet all of a sudden she understood those silly women who say, "I love you and nothing else matters;" she understood her mother's eternal patience. For "in real love the question of *happiness* is a secondary question."

The DISCOVERY of ELVIRA



by Anne O'Hagan

Author of "As Far As We Go," "The Flirtation," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY S. B. ASPELL

HER husband had been so universal a bore that scandal had been converted almost into approval when she set up a tertium quid. A woman, her set agreed—with that charity of judgment which is, perhaps, even more truly than gratitude, a lively sense of favors to come—would go mad if, without alleviation, she had to listen to Rollins' stories of his business deals, his tales of financial finesse, his endless anecdotes, the threads of which, like parallel lines, never converged to any point. The remembered sayings of a tertium quid were absolutely needed as a sort of raw-cotton protective for the harassed ears.

Of course it was true that Rollins was a successful business man, an all-conquering capitalist, even as he declared himself to be in his interminable yarns about himself. That was the really queer thing about him. He

talked like a babbling fool, but apparently he wasn't a babbling fool when he was on the Change. Poor, dear Elvira! What a pity he didn't have his living quarters down there somewhere, and leave her charming, pale-tinted drawing-room free of his big-blown presence, the fragrant atmosphere of her quarters empty of the sound of his big-booming voice! Of course she had to set up a tertium quid! The world did not inquisitively ask how far the affair progressed beyond the T. Q.'s baskings in front of her tea-time fire, his daily gifts of flowers and poems, their morning rides together in the park. The world, with an amiable grin of understanding and indulgence, invited them to dinner on the same night and saw to it that they sat side by side at table, out of range of Rollins' eyes. Not that Rollins ever looked for anything in the world but an auditor!

The affair had gone on long enough to have attained the sanctity of all established custom when Rollins died. He died suddenly, ingloriously, of a fishbone, swallowed with un-Fletcherized haste because of his determination not to spare his neighbors at the New York Texas Society's annual dinner a single detail of his transaction with the Vermont Maple Sugar Trust, which had netted him—and so forth and so forth.

Every one wondered how soon Elvira and the tertium quid would place their affair upon a city-hall footing. The tertium quid wondered a little about it himself. How soon was it *convenient* for an ardent lover who last week—yesterday afternoon indeed!—had eloquently declaimed against the horrid need of partings, who had more than once delicately suggested elopement—how soon was it *convenient* for him to propose marriage to a newly made widow? He found himself grateful for the respite from decision allowed him by the rites and observances due the passing of a distinguished financier like Rollins. He was grateful for the curtained seclusion in which Elvira dwelt for a week with her mother and her sister.

But by and by the reprieve was over. He was admitted again to Elvira's sitting room. He was prepared to do his duty. The provisions of Rollins' will, already published, offered a certain alleviation to the necessity of marrying his widow, even to a gentleman with a congenital distaste for responsibilities and a deep-rooted conviction that his own hearthstone would never be so much to his liking as almost any one's else.

Elvira was shrouded in crape. But her face was as pink and smooth as

Elvira was shrouded in crape.



was decorous in the circumstances. He kissed the white hand she held out to him. He murmured, "Dearest!" and he told her how relieved he was to find that she had not broken down under the sad strain of the last few weeks.

So far it was easy sailing.

"Poor Sam!" he went on, feeling his way. "You know, don't you, Elvira, that I could never have been selfish enough to want my own chance of happiness to come to me through his—in this way?"

Elvira responded suitably, though perhaps a little cryptically. There was something a trifle curious—arresting—about her expression. Poor Elvira! She was probably suffering a natural embarrassment as well as he. She might even doubt his intentions, as the old phrase went.

"But—now that he is gone, Elvira—and he went as one would wish to go oneself, in the full plenitude of bodily and mental strength—now that he is gone—"

Elvira did not come to his rescue, and he sat there floundering with his phrase, as poor Sam had floundered with the fishbone.

"Dearest, how soon are you going to put these things off—these black things? How soon are you going to let me take care of you? I don't ask you to do anything disrespectful to poor Sam's memory—we have always subjected our love to Sam's dignity, and this is no time to be less forbearing—but—now that he is gone— Do you remember, darling, that it was only three weeks ago I was talking to you of Sicily, and the orange groves, and the Mediterranean, and we were longing to be there together? Darling, how soon are you going to marry me?"

There! It was out now. The die was cast. Blessed bachelor freedom, precariously maintained for four decades against all assaults upon it, good-bye!

But—

"Never. I'm never going to marry you, dear," said Elvira softly, sweetly, determinedly.

"What?" cried the tertium quid. Then, exerting his self-control, he went on: "But, my dear girl—this is morbid! If it is remorse—"

"It isn't," interrupted Elvira calmly. "I'm not remorseful. I gave Sam all that he wanted of me, and I didn't cheat him in any way that would have counted with him. No, it isn't remorse at all."

"But a month ago—you— Why, you said that if only we had met in time—"

"I think, dear, it was you who said that," Elvira gently corrected him.

"But you agreed. Why, Elvira! Has it all been a game with you?" The tertium quid began to feel very badly used.

"No, not a game," said Elvira thoughtfully.

"But—you seemed to care for me. You said you cared for me—loved me. You let me make love to you. What does it all mean?"

"It means," stated the bereaved lady, "that— Don't be angry, please, dear Tertium! I don't want to be offensive. I only want to be truthful, and to make you understand. It means, as I have found out these recent days, that it wasn't that I especially needed a lover—I only needed an antidote for poor Sam. And now, you see, I don't any longer need an antidote for Sam. Flirtation with most married women, Tertium, is merely that—an antidote for matrimony. And so—"

The tertium quid's indignation was of the Victorianly virtuous brand. It was not until he reached the street that he remembered his blessed bachelor freedom, precariously maintained for four decades against all assaults upon it.

The Code of Honor

By Victoria Day

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWARD C. CASWELL

The first half of one of the most absorbing and dramatic short serials ever published in SMITH'S. We won't spoil the story for you by even hinting at the plot. We are sorry that you must wait until next month for the thrilling conclusion of the story.

CHAPTER I.

AS Lieutenant James Patrick Farley approached the home of his fathers—the more recent ones, that is, for his remoter forbears hailed from sea-washed Donegal—his heart was singing beneath his khaki tunic.

He, Jimmy Farley of Riverton Corners, had made good, decidedly, indisputably good, in the little mêlée recently ended across the waters. He thrilled to the knowledge of the silver bars upon his shoulders; he caressed with glowing eyes the three gold service stripes upon his left sleeve, the two glorious wound stripes upon his right; he basked in the sunlight of the admiring glances that his fellow passengers on the accommodation from Boston bestowed upon the insignia of his valor; he breathed deep to throw into higher prominence the multicolored ribbon bar upon his breast.

With that, he felt, he could face Geraldine, could face the whole tribe of the Emerys, with their immemorable tradition of eminence, on an equal footing—even he, freckle-faced Jimmy Farley, whose grandfather had been chief stableman and equine adviser to Geraldine Emery's grandfather in the days when that gentleman had maintained a racing stable—and thereby hastened the period when his family walked or patronized the plebeian trolleys.

It was of Geraldine chiefly that Jimmy thought as the slow train, with

its ancient, uncomfortable, cindery coaches, jerked its way eastward and northward. That was only natural, for the war had broken in upon the iridescent, smothering, feverish delight of his first real love affair. It had snatched him from wonderful clandestine kisses with which he had not begun to be sated. It had dragged him from embraces of which he used to dream in the hell of France, in the intervals between getting himself and other people into various sorts of danger and trouble. It had broken in upon the sharpest, most stinging bliss that eager youth can know—passion so sweet and spontaneous as to seem utterly pure, joy intensified for the moment by the need of secrecy.

Still, although it was of the wonderful Geraldine that he was mainly thinking, he trembled a little also at the thought of his father and mother, there in the brown cottage in Riverton Corners where he had been born. His father had a burr of Donegal about his speech, for all that he had been born in the United States—a burr acquired through devoted imitation of his father, the stableman, and of the cronies with whom old James Patrick used to consort. Jimmy knew how that burr would sound as his father welcomed him home. He knew how his mother's blue eyes would be full of tears, which she would laugh down, and how, though all her being might ache to throw her arms around him like a mother in the

movies, she would take it out in having the house redolent of all the dainties he had fancied since he had left off an exclusively milk diet; he knew how she would propel him with her plump, capable arms into the kitchen, where the supper would be spread.

By and by, when he and Geraldine were married, he supposed he would have to persuade his people to eat in the dining room. He could not picture Geraldine coming to a kitchen-spread supper. However, it would be some time yet before filial duties toward the old Farleys devolved upon her!

He went on thinking of his folks. How his father would gloat over the tales of the splendid exploits which had won him his citation, his decorations from two governments, and his first wound stripe! Jimmy grinned to himself as he watched the flying landscape of early spring. He was hanged if he was going to talk like a hero for the Old Man, any more than he had talked like a hero for the newspaper fellows who had tried to get a "story" out of him in New York!

The newspaper fellows! Ever since his encounter with them, Jimmy had been wondering if their life did not, after all, represent the solution of his difficulties. Hadn't he better "chuck" the law, despite its eminent respectability, and get into the newspaper game, with its more immediate recompenses? Of one thing Geraldine had been horribly sure, back there in 1917, and that was that he certainly could not keep on in the foundry, even in its office, and at the same time aspire to the honor of her hand. It simply was not to be thought of! And then he had begun to read law of nights in the musty old office of O'Hanlon & Briggs, on Main Street.

He himself had been of the opinion that the Emery tradition in the matter of occupation for the young men aspiring to enter the family was a mistaken one. If he could get ahead in the

foundry—— But of course, he couldn't, not to call it getting ahead, for there were all the young sons of the prolific Wright family eventually to succeed to the profitable managerial positions in the works.

But newspaper work, now—— Not in Riverton, of course, with its one daily paper—an evening sheet universally and rightly nicknamed the *Riverton Nightcap*, so firmly established was the belief in its soporific influence. No, he couldn't begin his swift ascent to the position required by the Emery tradition on the Riverton paper. But he could get a job in Boston, perhaps; and after that, there was New York. Journalism offered a fine career to a young man; the Emerys would have to acknowledge that. There had been Charles A. Dana and Horace Greeley and Lord Northcliffe. Jimmy Farley was suddenly grateful to his parents for having forced him to go through the high school and to take a year afterward in the Riverton Prep School. Surely there was equipment for journalism in so much education.

From preoccupation with his career, his mind drifted back again to his father. He would not boast about his exploits, even to warm the heart of the proud old man. Michael Farley was a hale and hearty fifty, but Jimmy had fallen into the habit of regarding anything over thirty as a pitiful example of senile decay, since he had seen all the terrific work of the world done by boys. However, his father's disappointment at his reticence over the attack would be compensated; the Old Man would be as much interested—more, perhaps—in that story which he could tell without making an ass of himself—the story of how he had met and worsted Colonel Bretherton.

That story had not been staled by publication in the papers—rather not! Jimmy grinned. And that had taken more pluck, more persistence, that lit-

tle exploit of his, than all the daring of barrage fires and all the cutting of enemy wire entanglements that had striped his breast with a vehemently rainbow effect! He could tell the Old Man that—but the Old Man must never let it go farther, must never let Heiny Schwartz's father get the truth of it.

Jimmy's vagrant thoughts went off on a tangent toward Heiny, the dull recruit, the torpid, the obstinate-seeming, whose stupidity his officers had insisted upon reading as the determined manifestation of disloyalty. But Jimmie had known Heiny from infancy. Although he had never heard of Binet, he knew that Heiny had never really grown up, had never acquired much greater capacity for managing himself and his life than when he had been a fat-faced baby in a large cap, with a Teutonic pacifier between his lips. And when Heiny's disciplining had grown more and more severe—"Bloody brutes!" murmured Jimmy, recalling—and when Heiny, under it, had grown less and less able to react normally to instructions, Jimmy had made an uproar.

He had been nothing but sergeant then, and he had known all that hung in the balance. It might be a Federal prison for him, for daring, when complaints made in the regular order of the military hierarchy were unavailing, to reach higher up and higher up—until there had come, finally, the investigation that had retired Colonel Bretherton to duty at home again.

Of course that hadn't been until they had killed poor Heiny. He, Jimmy Farley, would always call it murder, no matter how technically right the explanation of suicide had been. Oh, he had done a good thing in rousing all that turmoil, of which, naturally, no word had ever been allowed to leak out! It would have been a good thing even if it had resulted, as had seemed

for a while likely, in his court-martialing, his dishonorable discharge from the army, his punishment in one of those prisons where "slackers" and traitors and such vermin were confined.

But the affair had not come out in any such way. Probably the chance of his company's having been ordered into action accounted for that. While the brigade commander had been considering the information Jimmy had daringly succeeded in transmitting to him, the opportunity had come for him to prove himself daring in other and more spectacular ways than the braving of authority. Perhaps, too, Colonel Bretherton had given other indications of his complete unfitness for command than those embodied in Jimmie's laboriously penned communications to General Flyton. But the colonel, choleric elderly martinet, a product of the old army, had chosen to make Jimmy the scapegoat for all his anger.

Gee! Jimmy shivered and grimaced as he looked out, thinking how narrow an escape he had had from ruin. That advance, which his squad had so gloriously made at his heels—"the damned old dare-devils!" said Jimmy affectionately—had been all that had saved his hide. But by the time he had waked up in a base hospital, Colonel Bretherton had been on his way home, and a temperamental unfitness for command had been decently translated into physical unfitness.

His father would enjoy that tale. Michael had never had any use for the Brethertons. Jimmy tried to dig out of the confusion of early recollections some legend of a clash between the Michael Farley of thirty years ago and the Eustace Bretherton of the same date, over a cousin of Michael's who had been serving as maid in the big Bretherton place on the occasion of one of Eustace's holidays from West Point. He didn't succeed very well. There had been something, he was sure. He



It was she who had broken the silence. "Going fishing?" she had inquired placidly.

dimly remembered hearing his mother and her gossips talk about it with dramatic intensity in his childhood, when it was already mere history. But whatever it had been, it had helped to fan the flame of the colonel's resentment toward the persistent sergeant in the days when the chances of war had again put the two families in collision.

Then his thoughts went back to Gerladine. How wonderful it was that he had lived twenty-three years in the

same place with her and had never seen her—really seen her with eyes and mind and heart—until that day, two years past now, when he had come crashing down through the brush in Riverton woods toward the river, and had found her dabbling white feet in its limpid, dark amber! The mere memory of the picture made Jimmy faint with longing.

Her canoe had been beached on the sands of a tiny little cove. There was

a flash of bright red from it—cushions, it had proved to be—and somehow that brilliant blotch of color always mingled in his recollection of their first meeting with the whiteness that was Geraldine—white feet, lovely strong white legs bare to rounded knees, white skirts held panier-fashion around her hips, a white sweater, and above that the radiant whiteness of her face. Except for the vivid redness of her lips, Geraldine's skin showed no color. But her whiteness gave no hint of physical frailty. Jimmy used to struggle with recollections of the French he had learned in the high school, to recall a poem about a "*dame blanche*," and he was quite sure that that lady's whiteness had been like Geraldine's—something intriguing, something a man would want to bruise into evanescent patches of color with his kisses.

Jimmy had expected, for a moment, that the up-gathered white skirts would be released, that a feminine scream of startled modesty would rise upon the air, and that a nymph with covered legs and damp hems would scuttle back to the sandy beach. Nothing of the sort had happened. Geraldine had turned dark, unconcerned eyes toward the tall, auburn-haired, auburn-eyed lad who came forcing his way through the underbrush, fishing rod in hand. It was he who had shown embarrassment. He had paused, stared, opened his lips, closed them again, been acutely aware that this was Miss Emery and almost as acutely that his grandfather had been hostler to hers. It was she who had broken the silence.

"Going fishing?" she had inquired placidly, beginning to glide with un-hurried mien toward the beach and her boat. Jimmy had replied that that was his intention. He had added that he had heard the trout were biting up back of Big Rock.

Geraldine, stooping to extract a towel from the canoe and seating her-

self to rub feet and legs dry, had said indifferently that she didn't know; she didn't fish herself—thought it was a silly waste of time. Fish were stupid things.

Jimmy, fascinated, watched her nonchalantly putting on stockings and sneakers. He rallied his forces to the defense of fish and fishing. Trout were not stupid, not by a jugful. It required skill—art—to catch them, and he had heard that there was some big-sea fishing almost as dangerous as jungle hunting.

Geraldine had stayed for a demonstration of the skill required for trout fishing.

"Of course I know who you are," she told him, achieving her effect of half-insolent, half-condescending superiority. "I've been quite correctly brought up, and of course I shouldn't be staying with you if I didn't know that you were old Farley's grandson. I remember him on my grandfather's place when I was a little thing."

But Jimmy was able to achieve certain effects of insolence himself.

"Too bad your people had to sell the old place," he observed.

Geraldine flashed a sidewise look at him from beneath long lashes. A smile waited on her lips while she debated within herself whether to be crushing or human. The human instinct won, and the smile was allowed its way. It ended in a bubbling laugh.

"You'd better not let my Aunt Agatha hear you say so," she told him. "She won't allow that anything that ever has happened, or ever could happen, to an Emery is too bad."

"How do you feel about it?" Jimmy asked. "I'm more interested in that."

"There are advantages and disadvantages," Geraldine stated judicially. "For example, if the Emerys had never been obliged to sell the old Emery place, I don't suppose I should have been out

here to-day entirely undefended from chance meetings with stray fishermen. On the other hand, I shouldn't have to do my own hair and make my own clothes and live in Riverton, which is an awful hole, you know, and——”

“Do you mean,” inquired Jimmy, determined not to be misled by his hope's ecstatic interpretation of her remarks, but to have them clearly defined, “do you mean that it is one of the advantages of being poor that you can wander around by yourself like this and—and—and—meet people like me?”

“Of course I shouldn't have met you like this if I hadn't known who you were,” Geraldine reminded him.

But she was looking at him with an expression that somehow made Jimmy, though not at all a vain youth, aware of the pleasing fact that the little square mirror in his attic bedroom reflected for him every day a bright-eyed, ruddy-looking lad. A feeling of virility flowed through his veins. He was suddenly full of pride, full of power, and yet a strange humility possessed him, too. How gracious she was to him, this white flower of hot-house growth—to him, of the common soil, to him whose grandfather had served hers!

But he was sturdily democratic enough not to allow that thought to trouble him greatly in the hour that followed, and in the days that followed the hour. If he had not fallen heels over head in love with Geraldine, it would not have troubled him at all. But love's surging ambition to be able to lay the whole world at the beloved's feet came to possess him, and, with it, miserable compunctions about his lowly estate.

Until that day, Jimmy had never given thought to his estate. He had been troubled by no higher ambition than a desire to have a little more spending money, and even that had not been strong enough to interfere with

his pursuit of his still-boyish pleasures —a day's fishing, now and then, an afternoon of baseball as pitcher for the Wright Foundry team, his practice to maintain his renown in sprinting at the St. Monica's Young Men's Club, a dance, an evening at the movies.

“Lord, what a kid I was!” reflected Lieutenant Farley, as he recalled the thoughts and purposes of the lad who had come upon the nymph in the river that spring day. “What a kid!”

Well, Geraldine had changed him swiftly enough into a man. She had aroused in him a man's desires and had promised him a man's satisfactions. She had tumbled more swiftly, more precipitately into love even than he, it seemed. It was not a week after their first meeting that he had kissed her, and that kiss had been a surrender to the imperious demand of her eyes even more than to the demand of his own surging blood. To his imagination, she was still high, untouched, a maid inviolable.

He could visualize in every detail the scene of the first act in the drama of their love; could see the wooded slope above the river where they sat, the pale blueness of the spring sky; could feel again the delicious warmth of the sun traveling toward the summer solstice. There had been a swelling of life in hard branches, a flash of emerald among dun leaves and last year's grasses, the faint, delicious fragrance of earth beginning to loose itself from winter's bonds.

Still, he had held himself firm, had fought against the rising tide of spring in his own veins, not daring for a while to look at her lest he should catch and clasp her and never let her go again. Then she had sighed and he had turned to her, his white lady, the princess of his first fairy story, and had known that the spell was upon her, too. Her dark eyes had pleaded with him, her red lips had wooed him, the curve

of her neck and the tender droop of her shoulder had called to him.

Neither would ever be able to tell which of them it was that opened arms first. He had heard himself sob as he had caught her to him, and then he had heard her sigh again, but this sigh had been all pure happiness, pure content.

"Oh, boy, boy!" she had murmured. "You love me, don't you?"

"Love you!" He had scorned the trivial words, shopworn through all the generations of use given them by men who had never, who *could* never, have known such emotion as surged through him. "Love you!"

And then he, like every other lover since men have learned the art of speech, was defeated by the total inadequacy of language. He held her close and hid his eyes against her dark hair, and there he dried the stinging ecstatic tears that would start because of the miracle that had befallen him. Later, the first sight of a covey of airplanes, sailing serene against the sky, bright in the sunlight, was to bring the same unexpected smart of tears to his mazed eyes. Miracle, miracle!

Her Aunt Agatha was going away. She was frank in telling him that Aunt Agatha would never for a minute countenance his presence in the house on Emery Place which had replaced the former habitation of the family, the great acres all plotted and lotted into little holdings. She told it as she told most things, in a rather matter-of-fact way, not particularly as if she cared, or as if she expected his feelings to be hurt. Things were as they were; why wear oneself out flinging defiance at the actual? That seemed to be Geraldine's philosophy of life. His grandfather had been a sort of servant of her grandfather's, hadn't he? It didn't matter to her; she hoped she was a modern human being and not a poor fool starving on the dusty fruit of a family tree, like Aunt Agatha. But

whatever she felt, whatever he felt, and whatever the Declaration of Independence meant—Jimmy had found himself unexpectedly enthusiastic over that document and even more unexpectedly familiar with one or two of its phrases—Aunt Agatha would never let him come to the house if she were at home. But why fuss about that? Why not rejoice over Aunt Agatha's departure, instead?

It seemed that the elder lady was going out to Sandusky to visit the Austin Emerys, who were about to have their millionth child, Geraldine declared with some asperity. Austin was her father's brother, and Aunt Agatha's, and certainly he was old enough to realize that Heaven did not send support for all the fledglings that clergymen in charge of rather unsuccessful parishes might choose to have. But age had taught him nothing. He was newly married to a second wife, and Aunt Agatha was paying her biennial visit to the rectory—or the manse or the parsonage or whatever they called a clergyman's blooming shack in their denomination—and she, Geraldine, would be alone.

"Are you glad?" she whispered suddenly, softly.

She laid her cheek, so cool and firm and smooth, against his, and she ceased to play the spoiled child criticizing her elders with an impertinent materialism, and became the sweet, melting, maddening, disquieting girl whose kiss had made him the king of the world the moment before.

"Glad?" Again he cursed the total inadequacy of all words. But he had learned a new speech in this half hour.

"But why will you be alone?" he had asked her, after a moment. "Do you and your Aunt Agatha live there all by yourselves? Have you no servants, or anything?"

"We have Nana," said Geraldine, decisive and irritated. "Nana was my nurse, you see. And she had read so

many silly stories about self-sacrifice that, when the place was sold and partitioned up among grandfather's creditors, and the poor remnant divided among his children, and when it was discovered that Aunt Agatha and I could live in only the poverty-stricken way, Nana cried and said that she was coming to live with us and work for us for nothing. And Aunt Agatha, who had read a great deal of the same sort of truck, also cried, and they wept quite comfortably in each other's arms.

"And so Nana lives with us and rules us with the rod of iron you've heard about. And of course we continue to pay her wages. And one reason why we stay in Riverton when, on our income, we could really have a little fun somewhere else, is because Nana wouldn't like Florence or Monte Carlo or even New York. And she cooks for us when her rheumatism will permit, and when it doesn't we cook for her.

"Oh, yes! We have a servant. But when Aunt Agatha goes away to stay with Uncle Austin's family while Aunt Austin is in the hospital, I give Nana a holiday. She has a married sister in Boston. I'm supposed to take my meals with the Cummingses, who live next door to us and who are arriving at grandeur. It's funny about Emery Place that way. It's the meeting place of the ancient land aristocracy on its way to the poorhouse, and the fresh mill aristocracy on its way to glory. And so— Oh, boy, tell me you're glad that Uncle Austin's new wife is going to have a baby, and that you'll come to see me every single evening while auntie is away! For you know it is sometimes damp in these woods."

"I'll come." He was kissing each finger of the hand he held, methodically. Suddenly he thought of something that made him lay down the little hand, so soft, so shapely, so unlike the

hands of all the women and the girls he had known. "What are we going to do when Aunt Agatha comes back?" he demanded.

"It'll be warmer then," said Geraldine, giggling.

"No, but I'm in earnest. I'm not coming to your house only when she's away—like—like the servant's beau that she lets in on the sly."

"Perhaps you don't want to come at all!" she pouted.

"You know whether or not I want to come! But— Oh, Gerry, why don't you marry me right away? What else matters a button? What do you care about what people will say to your marrying the grandson of your people's old stableman? I'm not your stableman—and even if I were— Well, I'm not! And I'm going to amount to something. I know it! I feel it! I *mean* it! But let's be happy while I'm beginning to amount. Let's!"

Geraldine eluded his arms and his kisses that time, and she began his education in what were, for her, the immutabilities. They were, chiefly, that an Emery could marry only position and money, at least in prospect. He would have to be started in the right direction before he could think of such a thing as marriage, before she would dream of introducing him to Aunt Agatha and of braving all the hysterical storm of family pride which the mere introduction would provoke. And because she was so sure of what must be, and he was still so dazed and confused by the blissful wonder that had happened to him, her definiteness prevailed over his doubts.

He went up to the trim, new, suburban house on Emery Place on the evening of the day when the two elderly women had left it. Geraldine admitted him to a warm little hall with blue hangings and a curving white stair rail and a Chippendale chair and the portrait of the Duke of Wellington,



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under whom, it was recorded in the Emery annals, one of her ancestors had served. There was a fern, too, of tropical proportions, on a mahogany stand.

He was awkward and fumbling in these surroundings. She drew him through the blue hangings into a room with many rugs, with the flush of fire-light, with pictures, books, flowers, a cabinet of old blue china, a piano. He had never been in such a room before in his life. He gasped to think how

differently luxury spelled itself in the circle accustomed to it and in the circle to which he had been born. Old Daniel Phelan had made money and was said to have the finest house among all the parishioners of St. Monica's. But how unlike this place of scented charm, of gay invitation, was the big, square, bleak, overfurnished parlor of the Phelans!

It was wonderful to be there with Geraldine. She was not the sweatered, outdoor person he had known thus far.

She was lovely in something that was colored like peaches, like maize, like apricots—something that fell open at her neck and revealed the lovely line of her throat until it met the rounding of her bosom, something that had long, wide sleeves that bared her beautiful arms whenever she raised them above her head. She was a strange, new being, and Jimmy was afraid of her, and stood awkward, constrained, until she rose on tiptoe and freed him with a kiss. That kiss was Geraldine, and he forgot the strangeness.

He saw, that night, that it would be quite out of the question to expect Geraldine to marry him until he was able at least to provide her with a setting like this, with clothes like those she was wearing. And unlearned as he was in the values of commodities, he was yet aware that the poverty of the Emerys was a more costly affair than the prosperity of the Farleys.

All that wonderful week and all the next, he came. And the first week had not half gone before he knew that, whatever befell, he and Geraldine must be married. For girls like her, gently born, gently reared, safeguarded by an innumerable host of relatives and friends, never yielded their proud, beautiful little bodies without yielding also their hearts and their souls, and men do not trifle with these.

He could never have told how it happened that Geraldine had surrendered herself utterly to him; he would no more have dreamed of asking, or expecting, such surrender than he would have expected a saint in paradise to come down and be his maid of all work. But—it had happened. There had been an evening in that quiet house when they had swooned to oneness in each other's arms.

Out of the amazement and ecstasy of that moment, Jimmy had come to earth with terror and with remorse. He had pleaded with her to forgive him.

"For what, you darling goose?" Geraldine had asked him, almost crisply. Then she had thrown her arms around him with passion and had said, again and again: "I love you, I love you, I love you! Do you hear?"

He recognized the fact that she was "forgiving" him, as he called it, was forgiving herself, perhaps, and asserting the utter rightness of all that love could do or claim. But the teaching of St. Monica's, unheeded when it was received, had struck chill upon his heart. Marriage was a sacrament; lacking it—Besides, she was only a girl; she didn't know what she was doing. They must be married right away. He would make his career afterward. It was not as if she were a girl of the factory, though Jimmy, for his part, had always treated them with cleanly respect.

So he reasoned with her. But her replies stung him like little whips. She loved him and she would take the joy of love when and how she could. But for the rest the situation between them was unchanged. He must have at least *something* to offer before he sought her hand in the approved way.

"But if anybody should know? Dearest girl, Gerry, Gerry—you little goose, do you know what people would say about you, what they would call you? They would say you were *bad*."

"Jimmy dear," Geraldine had answered him, with a clearness that had pierced home to the very center of his being, "no one is going to know anything about us. Don't you suppose I knew what sort you were before I—well, before I let things go so far with us? Don't I know that you would rather be cut up in tiny little pieces than have me despised? Don't I know that, whether your grandfather was Grandfather Emery's stableman or not, you're everlastingly a gentleman, and that a girl's reputation is safe with a gentleman? Perjure himself like a

gentleman indeed! Pouf!" She snapped her fingers to indicate scorn for so poor a code of honor. "Why, I tell you, Jimmy Farley would be drawn and quartered before he would fail a woman!"

"I would, I would, indeed I would," said Jimmy, very happy and very miserable, elated, a conqueror, and depressed, a sinner.

And then they talked about the avenues that lay open before him to wealth and distinction, and he went home magnificently resolved to achieve fortune overnight, earnestly determined to treat his mad, generous, wonderful sweetheart as if she were a saint in one of the windows of St. Monica's, until he could claim her boldly from her family. But by the next day there remained only the wonderfulness of her, only the imperious need to be with her again, to know her his—his, all his.

Two days before Aunt Agatha came back, the president proclaimed that a state of war existed between Germany and the United States, and Jimmy Farley awoke to the fact that there was something else in the world beside Geraldine and bliss. He wanted to enlist at once—he didn't dare to enlist. He must make ready, some way or other, for marriage.

But Geraldine would not hear of that. If he was a fighter by instinctive temperament, she was, so she gave him to understand, a patriot. Besides, might not war give them just what they needed of position and distinction? Jimmy modestly suggested what she, it appeared to him, was overlooking—that he might be killed. She looked at him out of strange eyes.

"Ah, Jimmy! To die like that—in a great cause, young, loved, loved—ah, so madly loved my dear!—never to be disillusioned, never to fail—Jimmy, I should cry my eyes out if you got killed, I should kill myself—but it

would be a wonderful thing to go out like that."

"Not half so wonderful as living with you, Gerry," Jimmy had prosaically insisted.

And she had agreed, with a half laugh and a half sigh. But many and many a time, over there in the trenches, he had remembered the strange look in her eyes.

He had besought her to marry him secretly before he went away, but she had resisted his pleas.

"You may meet a French girl you'll like better!" she had teased him. "And then how you'd hate to think that you were married at home!"

"Geraldine!" He had been rough in rebuking her sacrilege. "Don't talk as if you were less than my wife!"

"Ssh!"

"There's nobody here in these damned woods." They had been meeting again in the Riverton woods, since Aunt Agatha's return.

"All the little leaves are opening their ears, and you know what voices they've got! You mustn't say such things. I love you, of course—you scarcely need to be told that—and you love me. I believe it with all my heart, boy! But people have got over loving before now, my dear. Look at all the widows and widowers who marry again and are very happy. Look at all the divorces. Mind you, I don't think it will be that way with us, but it might. And I'm glad you are going over there free—free to fall in love with a French girl if you want to. And I wouldn't tie you down, not with one weency, weency little thread."

"I'd tie you down with a ship's cable if I could," he had told her, and she had laughed and sighed and said:

"Ah, if you only could!"

But he had gone away with no stronger tie to hold her to him than the sweet, poignant memories of their meeting and their brief days of love.

Geraldine would not even let him write to her. How could she explain to Aunt Agatha the receipt of letters from him? Nor would she write to him.

"You probably wouldn't get my letters anyway," she said prophetically. "Some other James Patrick Farley would get them. The army'll be full of you fighting Irish, and there'll be dozens of James Patrick Farleys among them. I shan't write you a single letter—that is, I shan't send you one. I hate letter writing, Jimmy, and think that any news that is worth sending is worth telegraphing. Maybe I'll write to you, though—and keep the letters. And when you come marching home, a brigadier general or something stylish like that—why, I'll bring them all out and we'll sit in front of the fire and burn them up unread. There'll be something sweeter to do than to read old letters, won't there? I'll introduce you to Aunt Agatha. 'Oh, Aunt Agatha, I want you to meet my fiancé, General Farley. General Farley, my aunt, Miss Emery.' Wouldn't it be fun? Say you'll come home a brigadier general, Jimmy!"

Well, he was coming home not quite a brigadier general, but a rather promising young man notwithstanding. And his heart was in a tumult of question and of desire. The sweet fever of love in his veins had been abated, for a while, by the rigors and dangers of the life he had been leading. But the closer he came to Riverton, the more sharply he lived again those passionate, crowded, joyful dream weeks when Geraldine had made him lord of life—of his life and of hers.

He had to dismiss Geraldine from his thought. A gray-bearded man had approached him apologetically, and had asked him in what engagements he had been wounded. He was obliged to answer courteously. The old man rambled on about the Spanish War and the reasons why it had always been impossible for him to get into a scrimmage when

there was one. Then a country woman with a bulging bag upon her arm came up and asked his name and his regiment, and wanted to know if he had happened to meet her nephew over there, and offered him an apple.

"I bet you there ain't another apple in the hull State that has wintered like mine," she boasted. And he took it smilingly and gratefully.

At Rockingham Junction a crowd of people came aboard the train, and among them was a girl who seemed familiar to him. She was in the overseas uniform of the Y. M. C. A. and he vaguely wondered if he had seen her over there. She looked about for an empty seat and, finding none, she came along to Jimmy's and he made space for her. They looked at each other questioningly.

"Isn't it Jimmy Farley?" she asked after a minute. "Jimmy Farley of Riverton?"

"Yes, but I—— I seem to know you, and yet——"

"You never knew me," she told him. "You only saved my life once. Don't you remember now, or is that such a commonplace for you that it doesn't place me? Angie Howard—Mr. Judd Howard's niece."

"Oh, yes! Of course! But I didn't save your life."

"Well, I should never have got that canoe righted if you hadn't come along, and I was such a fool that I should have kept on trying to, instead of striking out for shore. Uncle, I am sure, thanked you properly——"

"Improperly." Jimmy's eyes twinkled at her. "He came down to my father's place and feed me for it. And that's not the worst of it," he added. "I have a distinct recollection of having taken his fee!"

"I hope it was a good one. I've never known just how dearly Uncle Judd valued me."

"It was a small one if you think of

the value of what I saved, but a whopping big one if you consider that I didn't do anything to earn it. Gee, I wonder if every boy of fourteen would be so—mercenary! I rejoiced in that twenty dollars. I think I bought a second-hand bicycle with it!"

"I went away to college the next fall, and I've never been much at Riverton since, except for vacations. This is going to be a long holiday, I guess. It'll be good, I think. Are you coming home for good? Are you mustered out?"

"Yes, but I haven't got back to civies yet. How about you?"

"The same. I did canteen work for sixteen straight months. I'm tired. I'm glad of peace—glad, glad!"

He looked at her sympathetically. He saw that she seemed indeed tired. There were lines about her lips and about her eyes. She must be older than he, anyway, if she had been going to college the season when he had actually taken money for having righted her capsized canoe and held it while she managed to scramble aboard it again. She must be twenty-seven or eight; not very pretty, either, but a good, dependable-looking girl.

"Has Mr. Howard kept up his big place at Riverton all these years?" he asked. "Of course I know that he hadn't sold two years ago. It seems longer! But so many of the men who had large estates in and about Riverton weren't able to resist the real-estate boom that came along with the war and the munitions—"

"Uncle Judd withheld it. I don't think anything would induce him to part with Howard Hill. He's very—very set in his ways. Although"—she smiled whimsically, and her strong, tired face brightened a little—"I don't suppose I ought to say that of him, since he gave all of us relatives the surprise of our lives last summer by get-

ting married. Every one supposed him a trebly-dyed bachelor."

"But he came to it at last, did he?" Jimmy answered her smile with one of his own.

"Yes. I suppose there isn't any such thing as real immunity. She used to be a lovely looking girl. Did you ever know her? Geraldine Emery?"

The revolutions of the wheels, the throb of the engine, repeated the same absurd, grotesque words—"Did you ever know her? Geraldine Emery." "Did you ever know her? Geraldine Emery." "Did—"

He must try to pull himself together and answer the tired-looking woman in the ugly uniform before she turned her eyes upon him and discovered—What was it she would discover?

Then it occurred to him that the whole thing was an hallucination. She probably had not said anything such as he had thought he had heard. Perhaps he was not really on the train bound for Riverton—on the dusty, cindery, puffy, jerky old afternoon accommodation. Perhaps he was still in the hospital—

"I beg your pardon," he said at last, when the girl had turned to look at him in surprise. "I— You said something. I—don't think I heard it. Every now and then," he added confidentially, "things still seem pretty—pretty confused."

"Gassed?" she said. "I thought so! I mean from what you have just said. Not that you looked— What I was saying wasn't important. I was just asking you if you had ever happened to know the pretty girl in Riverton whom my uncle married, a Miss Emery."

"No," said Jimmy, very carefully. "No. I can't say that I remember meeting her. You see, our circles weren't—what do you call it?—interlocking. My grandfather used to be stableman to her grandfather, and my

father is a journeyman carpenter. So you see——”

“Oh, we've got past that sort of stuff since this war began,” asserted Miss Howard cheerfully and confidently.

“I never knew—— Oh, my God!” cried Jimmy Farley.

“My dear boy!” cried the kind girl who had been “dear-boying” doughboys for so long. “I'm most awfully sorry you feel so! It's the gas.”

“Yes. The gas. And the trip is so damnable long—so infernally, damnable slow! I—I beg your pardon. I think I'll go and smoke——”

She made way for him to pass and looked after him with anxious, friendly eyes.

“Poor boy!” she thought. And then, irrelevantly, “I don't know when I've seen so good-looking a fellow—so brown and lithesome, and with such wonderfully colored eyes. He was a freckled little tike the day he pulled me out of East River.”

In the smoker Jimmy sat, clenching his nails into his palms. And the reverberations of the train that had been saying again and again, “Did you ever know her? Geraldine Emery,” changed and began to say something that Geraldine had once said to him: “Don't I know that you would rather be cut in tiny little pieces than have me despised?” “Don't I know that you would rather be cut in tiny little pieces than have me despised?”

He who had been hurrying home to Geraldine's embrace, to her wonderful kisses, to her soft, clinging arms, to all the miraculous sweetness and perfume and passion of her—— He must pull himself together before the train came into Riverton. She might be at the station to meet her husband's niece. He might see her face to face—his angry face to her false one.

But although there was a great equipage there to receive Miss Howard and to convey her away, there was no one

in it. She looked kindly around for him; he knew that she was looking for him, although he kept out of her sight. She wanted to reassure herself, he supposed, about his condition. She needn't worry! Her uncle had paid him adequately for the little service he had rendered her in the river, eleven years ago. He belonged to the class that can be paid for anything—anything. Any service, any wrong—anything! The negligible class that can be duped and that must keep silence——

In a confusion of fury and grief, he started to walk home. Silver shoulder bars, wound stripes, decorations, all meant nothing and less than nothing to him in the blinding wound to his vanity, his love. He didn't want to see his mother's teary-bright blue eyes, to hear his father's richly drawled questions. He didn't want to talk about the attacks or even to tell about Colonel Bretherton and poor, foolish Heiny Schwartz. He rather envied Heiny at the moment, and wondered if, after all, he had been so very foolish. He had made short shift of the cheating, hollow game of life, at any rate!

And to think how he had lived upon the memory of wonderful caresses out there, while she—— He shuddered. Paugh! Women were vile! And then he found himself crying in the dusk.

CHAPTER II.

Colonel Bretherton had resigned from the service of an ungrateful country shortly after being returned to its shores. He took up his abode again in the seat of his forefathers at Riverton and considered, for a time, how he could best show his zeal and patriotism with the avenue of his profession closed to him. “Show his zeal and patriotism” was his own somewhat euphemistic rendering of the emotion and ambition that possessed him. “Expend his hatreds and give vent to his rancors”

would more correctly have expressed his desires in the opinion of unprejudiced outsiders.

The *Riverton News and Courier* was more or less on the market. That is, its latest owner had died, leaving only female descendants, and although the *Riverton News and Courier* ran every evening at least a paragraph acclaiming the ability of women as revealed by the war, it would have regarded it as a revolutionary, an iconoclastic procedure, had women attempted to run the paper. It would have seemed as revolutionary to the middle-aged legatees, gallinaceously busied about the Red Cross and the League for Women's Service, as to any other dyed-in-the-wool Rivertonian. So they were quite ready to sell out a large share of their interest to Colonel Bretherton. He soon succeeded in acquiring the majority stock, and forthwith he set himself up to be a patriot in civil life by attacking the administration, criticizing the war department, and vociferously demanding reprisals upon all Americans of German origin for everything that had happened in Belgium.

If the press of the country had been under any such sharp-cut regulation as the military arm of the government, undoubtedly Colonel Bretherton would have been retired from the proprietorship of a newspaper as inevitably as he has been retired from the management of troops at war. But, in spite of al-



"I never knew— Oh, my God!" cried Jimmy Farley.

leged censorship, the press was comparatively free. Each evening Colonel Bretherton was at liberty to let loose all the evil passions that had accumulated within him during the preceding twenty-four hours, in one scathing editorial, drafted, to be sure, along somewhat old-fashioned lines. It afforded him infinite satisfaction, and it freed the patient ladies of his household from much of the savage humor that they would otherwise have had to bear.

That it wounded and outraged all the descendants of Teutonic settlers in Riverton valley, of whom there were many, was a comparatively small matter. That its effect upon contemporaries of his, like him in irascibility and differing from him only in politics,

was to make them bloodthirsty and incoherent once a day, was likewise a comparatively small matter. In fact, the *Riverton News and Courier*, except as a safety valve for Colonel Bretherton's tempers and disappointments, was not an important organ. That is, it was not until Jimmy Farley returned to Riverton.

To Jimmy, sore and abysmally solitary in the world to which he had come home, it made no difference at all that the *News and Courier* did not interview him upon his adventures and success. But his father and mother and all their circle of friends in St. Monica's parish were angered by the deliberate slight. Had not the New York papers interviewed him? Had not the Boston papers interviewed him? Well, then, what did the Riverton paper mean by ignoring his return—the return of the only one of Riverton's sons who had been decorated by two governments? What did it mean that, on the day after his restoration to the place of his birth, the leading editorial in the *News and Courier* began, with antique fervor:

"For God's sake, let us get back to work! The war is over and the worship of the war's little tin heroes had better be over, too."

Jimmy laughed when his father, with the veins on his forehead swelling, brought him the paper and pointed with a big, rough forefinger to the offensive editorial. It was the first time that Jimmy had laughed since he had come home. It was not an altogether pleasant laugh, but perhaps it was better than none at all, as Mary Ellen Farley, watching her son with puzzled, grieving eyes, decided.

"We had a little run-in, the colonel and I," said Jimmy, "and I guess he got the worst of it. He'd better not try much of this on, though. He might get the worst of another little run-in."

He sounded surly and boastful, and

his mother was more puzzled than ever. These had not been the traits of the Jimmy who had gone away to war two years ago.

"Write him a letter and dare him to publish it," quoth Michael.

But Jimmy's wave of sullen wrath had already spent itself.

"Oh, what do I care what the old fool writes?" He dismissed the matter with a shrug, and went out to see about buying a civilian outfit.

He was equally indifferent when it was excitedly reported to him that Colonel Bretherton had tersely—even profanely—declined to be one of the platform committee at the Red Cross meeting at which he, Jimmy, had been prevailed upon to speak about life in the trenches. Not about his own life, of course; Jimmy thought that he could not have done that if the war had still hung in the balance and his speaking would have decided it! But there were official pictures to be shown, and he supposed he could manage to deliver a running commentary upon these.

"Who wants him on the platform?" asked Jimmy. "I don't. The world will be just as pleasant a place for me if I never see him anywhere in it again."

That evening's issue of the *News and Courier* crowded into the briefest possible space the announcement of the Red Cross Rally in Red Men's Hall that evening, and gave extreme prominence to Colonel Bretherton's anti-Irish views on the Irish question and the Irish people in all parts of the globe.

So it went on during the fortnight when Jimmy might have been the hero of his native place, had being a hero been in his line. He was too deeply preoccupied with his own shock and sorrow to care very much about it. He dismissed it all lightly enough, saying:

"He's too old for me to break his head, and I guess he knows it. He'll spit it all out before long, and then

he'll feel better. If he doesn't—" He shrugged his shoulders and left it to the imagination of his hearers what might happen in that case.

When he had been at home about two weeks and had not yet presented himself at the foundry, he received a summons one morning from Mr. Wright.

"Aren't you coming back to work, Jimmy?" the foundry owner asked when the young man had answered the call and was sitting in the inner office. "Or shall I call you lieutenant?"

"No. I shed the title with the uniform," replied Jimmy. "And about coming back to work—why, I don't know. I was thinking a little bit of—of getting out of Riverton." He had been staring moodily out of the window during the first part of his reply, but at the end he met his old employer's eyes with a sort of hurt look in his own.

"Wanderlust got you? I suppose a lot of the boys will hate to settle down again."

Mr. Wright looked sadly out of the window at the grass beginning to green in the office courtyard. His own eldest son, trained to succeed him, would not come back from Flanders. The service flag of the foundry was still waving at the gate; the stars were growing a little faint, even the gold ones. He sighed, then pulled himself together and turned back to Jimmy, measuring him with keen eyes.

"It isn't exactly that, sir," replied Jimmy, a little hesitant. "Only—only there are some reasons why I'd rather get out of Riverton."

"Bretherton seems to have it in for you. Any ground for it?"

"He's got nothing on me, if that's what you mean. And if he doesn't let up, I guess I know a way to make him. No, it isn't on account of anything like that. It's something—private." Jimmy's voice trailed off into space.

"Well," said Mr. Wright briskly, "if it's private, I suppose that means there's a girl mixed up with it. Take an old man's word for it, my boy, petticoat trouble is never worth running away from. Very little trouble is, as far as I have seen. If Bretherton hasn't got anything upon you that you're afraid of—"

"He hasn't," Jimmy affirmed with vigor. "I guess I'll stay right here in Riverton, if there's danger of any one's thinking that he can drive me out. What did you want to see me about, sir?"

Mr. Wright rose and walked up and down for a minute or two.

"How old are you, Jimmy?" he asked. "Twenty-five, eh? And you came to me when you were sixteen. You've had mighty good training in the business. I'm sorry your general education wasn't a bit longer, a bit more thorough. The war has made a lot of changes. It's made one big one to me. My boy, Joe— Well, in short, none of the plans I had back there in 1914 are going to stand. Joe is dead. Arthur is more wrapped up than ever in surgery. Lillian's husband simply couldn't bear to give up his pretty gold maple leaves, and he's reentered the army as a profession. Dick, my nephew, the pacifist with the long hair and the soft ties, has gone in permanently for free verse and free love and all those stenches. God, I'm glad his mother didn't live to see what he became!"

"Well, all this means that I've got to find the future management of the works outside the family. I suppose I should have to do it anyway. I'm not optimistic enough—class optimistic, I mean—to believe that the industrial system is going to remain what it has been. I credit myself with enough intelligence to know when to come in out of the rain. I intend a gradual reorganization of the works on a profit-

sharing basis. I intend to promote men from the shop to a share in the management before the mechanics and the unions make me do it. Oh, I suppose I'm merely trying to save my skin. But that seems to me wiser than not to try to save it. But I didn't mean to give you a harangue on capital and labor. What I meant to do was to point out to you that there is a real chance for you here, if you want to come back to us."

Ah, Geraldine! If only she had waited!

"I'll come back," said Jimmy briefly. "I'll come back and I'll try to make good. I wish, as you say, that I had taken more schooling. It wasn't my people's fault that I didn't. They would have made any sacrifice to give me a good education, but I—— Oh, I don't know!"

"I understand," answered Mr. Wright kindly. "Most boys strike that adolescent period of idleness and wilfulness, and it's only well-to-do families that can afford to wait and see their sons through it. Well, I don't know that a college education makes much difference in the long run. It may speed up results a bit, but it's experience that counts. Now, let's get down to business."

If only she had waited! Jimmy saw golden vistas of importance and prosperity opening before him. If only she had waited! If only she had been true!

And now life began to widen out before him. The knowledge that he had an important managerial position in the works that dominated the industrial life of the town spread rapidly. From being a total ineligible, he became a promising young man. From being socially negligible, outside the pale, he became almost popular. Mr. Wright put him up for membership in the Business Men's Club, and he was swept in at the first meeting of the admissions committee, although it was an open secret that Colonel Bretherton

had written a "strong" letter, denouncing the action of the club in letting down its bars to "the scum of the city."

And then followed his first invitation into the social life of the community. Mrs. Wright, by means of an engraved card, requested the honor of his company at dinner.

"She must be givin' an awful lot of things to keep big printed cards like these all ready to fill in," said Mary Ellen, holding the invitation in a fold of her blue gingham apron and looking at it admiringly. "Eight o'clock! When do the people sleep? Jimmy, you'll have to buy a dress suit. You'll look grand in one."

"Ah, I ain't going," answered Jimmy, relapsing into ancient habit of speech.

"Not going?" Indignation sparkled in his mother's eyes and sounded in her voice. "Not going? Indeed then an' you are!"

And of course he went. He arrived at the big house, granite and timber, bayed and gabled and turreted, with eclectic appropriations from many schools of architecture, in a greater state of trepidation than he had known since the day he had presented himself a recruit before his examining board. Mary Ellen had succeeded in filling him with cold terror concerning the implements he would find on the dining table. She had quoted to him largely from a correspondence column on "good form," which she read every Sunday in the woman's page of one of the Boston papers, enjoying herself hugely the while because she lived in a circle where people could act as they liked and where they generally felt inclined to act amiably.

He had his moment of awkwardness when he was passed along, by a magnificent man who looked to him not unlike his ideas of an English bishop, to a dressing room where another man insisted upon helping to divest him of the light overcoat he was wearing. He

hoped he was all right. He hoped that the clerk in Dobson & Fairbanks—a boy with whom he had used to play hookey from the grammar school years before—had not deceived him in regard to what “they” were wearing this year. He gave a frightened look in the mirror, at his first white necktie, and then gained courage in regard to it as he beheld that of the Reverend Dr. Maddison, entering the dressing room after him. His wasn’t so badly tied as the clergyman’s, at any rate!

He followed in the wake of Doctor Maddison to the drawing-room. Thus he was enabled to steer straight for his hostess, portly, splendid, fairly architectural, at one end of the room. After she had greeted him, fervently, joyously, as if he, of all the persons there, had conferred the greatest favor and the greatest delight upon her, another pleasant voice sounded in his ears. It was the Y. M. C. A. girl of the train, Angie Howard.

“How do you do, Mr. Farley,” she began, approaching him at once and saving him from that agonized moment of shipwreck that comes when a hostess has cast a strange guest overboard to sink or swim as he may. “Angie Howard, you know—”

“I haven’t forgotten, this time,” declared Jimmy.

He was enthusiastically glad to see her. He almost clung to her hand. She seemed an old, old friend. Besides, the canteen training must survive—she would be kind to a soldier! She looked younger and prettier than on that afternoon when she had, all unconsciously, dealt him so terrible a blow. She was in a cool, soft, shimmering gray thing that made him—poor ignorant—think of his mother. His mother, to be sure, never displayed segments of her back and neck, or permitted her arms to glimmer whitely through mere gauze veillings. But there was an effect of quiet and simplicity about Miss

Howard’s frock that made it seem to the adventurer in Riverton society almost dear and homely.

“I althost called you up that night, after I got out to my uncle’s place,” Angie went on. “I was so afraid you were really having a serious time. How have you been since? You’re looking tremendously fit.”

“Oh, I’ve been all right. And are you getting rested?”

“Rather! I’ve been leading the life of a pampered pup ever since I struck Uncle Judd’s. By the way, I want you to meet him. And my pretty young aunt. You said you didn’t know them.”

The solid floor seemed to slip away from beneath his feet. It was as if he was standing on the very edge of the world, with only a great void before him. He wanted to cry out to Angie Howard, “Don’t, don’t!” but he could not speak. He caught the back of a chair in a tense grip. He had a curiously clear impression of the way in which her shining hair was waved and rolled as she turned her head away from him and called, in that friendly, comfortable, clear voice of hers.

“Oh, Uncle Judd! Come here a moment. I want you to meet Mr. Farley. You know—the Lieutenant Farley the Boston papers were full of a month or so ago.”

Jimmy found himself shaking hands with Geraldine’s husband, a tall man, gray, austere, a little pompous.

“We met once before, Mr. Howard,” said Jimmy, forcing himself to speak. “You came down to our house—we live on the other side of the tracks—to reward me for turning Miss Howard’s canoe right side up in the river. I was a shameless little beast, and took the reward gleefully. Twenty dollars. I bought a second-hand bicycle with it.”

“Really?” Mr. Howard spoke coldly, appearing to question the taste of the reminiscence. “Very natural, I dare say. Most small boys take money when

it is offered to them—unless their parents— And that was a good many years ago. How long were you in France?"

"Now, Uncle Judd," Angie broke in decisively, "you men are not going to get the history of the war out of Mr. Farley until the women have left the dining room. Come along with me, Mr. Farley. I want you to meet my aunt." She laughed at the humorous title.

In a sort of daze Jimmy followed her across the room. There was a deep-embasured window extending out into a shrubbery already flowering. A woman and a man were seated on the semicircular settee that ran around the window. There was a mist before Jimmy's eyes. He could not distinguish the woman's features, and even the outline of her figure was vague to him. He scarcely knew what Angie Howard was saying. Laughing and peremptory, she was dismissing the man. He caricatured rebellion, but he went, and then—

"Geraldine," she was saying in her friendly way, "I particularly want you to meet Mr. Farley. You know, he saved my life once. May I present him? Mrs. Howard, Mr. Farley."

The mists cleared away. Jimmy looked down. There was the same beautiful white face that had looked up at him in Riverton wood. There was the same soft, vivid red mouth. There were the same dark, bold, alluring eyes. She was wonderful with jewels. They gleamed in a band about her black hair. They hung, flashing points of flame, down her milk-white throat and bosom. He could not speak. A great, hopeless wave of desire swept over him again. His—his—his! And now she belonged to that gray man talking politics across the room.

"Won't you sit down, Mr. Farley?" Geraldine's voice was golden as honey, cool as moonlight. The little white

hand he had kissed so often was drawing aside skirts of opalescent chiffon, and making room for him beside her. "We must have known each other, I think, at some period of our past. We are both Rivertonians. At any rate, I am, and the papers made you out the favorite son of the town. Are you going away, Angie? That's good. I want to have a long talk with Mr. Farley."

He sank down beside her. He had not spoken yet. Beneath its brown, his face had grown ashen. His eyes, dark red-brown like his hair, looked at her almost like a dog's that has been whipped, full of mute adoration and reproach.

"Don't look at me like that!" Geraldine breathed the words in a whisper, as Angie drifted away. "Don't look at me like that. My husband is watching. He's always watching. Oh, Jimmy, Jimmy! Say that you hate me, and have done with it!"

"That isn't what I've got to say," said Jimmy hoarsely and quite unpremeditatedly. And then, "Gerry, Gerry! Why did you? How could you?"

"Here comes Mrs. Wright with Mrs. Maddison in tow," said Geraldine in an ordinary voice. "I'll wager you anything you say that Mrs. Maddison is going to ask you to speak to the Girls' Friendly on housekeeping in the trenches, or some nice little domestic topic like that. Do you take me?"

But before Jimmy had rallied his forces sufficiently to attempt a reply, his hostess was indeed presenting the rector's wife, and that lady was preferring a request that Jimmy should speak before one of the church societies. Geraldine's eyes were dancing brilliantly as she looked up from her comfortable seat at the little standing group of two stout, dominant matrons and the slim young warrior.

When Jimmy had begged off from addressing the ladies of the church,



"We had a little run-in, the colonel and I," said Jimmy, "and I guess he got the worst of it."

Edward Casen

Mrs. Wright's eyes took note of her assembled flock.

"I think every one's here," she murmured half under her breath. "You're to take Mrs. Howard out, Mr. Farley —of course, you know that."

Jimmy didn't, having failed to look at the card the man in the dressing room had given him. Mrs. Wright went on: "Come, my dear. Doctor Stafford's looking around for you." She dragged Mrs. Maddison away with her.

Jimmy dropped back upon the settee beside Geraldine. Through the open window, the scent of flowering lilacs was wafted strongly, almost like a smoke. It intoxicated him, it—or Ger-

aldine. All the misery he had endured from her treachery seemed to be melting, as pain seems dissolved by heady drafts of wine.

CHAPTER III.

It was at the Curtis' one evening that Jimmy heard his first discussion upon the respective virtues of the male and the female of the species. It was all rather amusing to him—novel and trivial. In his family set, when people wished to be amusing, they told funny stories or cracked noisy jokes. Sometimes they gossiped—indeed, very frequently and pungently they gossiped. But in the new world into which he

had entered as one of Mr. Wright's managers, and perhaps a little also as the favored youth who had given Riverton a metropolitan renown for a week or so, there seemed to prevail other notions of amusing conversation. They talked heatedly about abstractions like this one they were discussing now —what were the distinctively feminine virtues and what the distinctly masculine. The game, it seemed, was to say something topsy-turvy. It was brilliant to upset standards. For example, there was Leila Curtis now.

"There are no distinctively masculine or distinctively feminine virtues, of course. Every one knows that—really knows it, at heart. People only pretend that there are sex qualities. They say that men are strong and brave, and that women are kind and true. All poppycock! Women are just as strong and brave as men if you give 'em the chance, and men—"

"You'll never say that men are as kind and true as women, Leila," objected young Jock Maddison, in shocked remonstrance.

"Yes, I will," retorted Leila defiantly. "And I won't be handing men such a great, big bouquet, at that! Women aren't so very kind and true. What do you think about it, Mr. Farley? You're a real hero, you know, and we'll all listen to you with respect."

Leila was young. She was a mere flapper, not more than eighteen or nineteen. Jimmy, feeling hot about the ears, wondered how old she had been two years—twenty-six—twenty-seven months before. A half-grown tomboy! Perhaps she had had her suspicions of Geraldine, that wonderful spring when Aunt Agatha had gone away.

"You must know! You must have an opinion," she insisted in her spoiled-child fashion. "You've risked your life for your fellows, haven't you? And you didn't have to know them very

well, or to love them very dearly, to do it, did you? You just did it!"

"What fellows do in war doesn't count, Miss Leila," said Jimmy. "They act in a bunch. They aren't persons any more—just parts—and they aren't thinking of sacrifice or of saving their friends, particularly. They're thinking of winning their next point. They're looking not to—not to be quitters, I suppose."

"Well," she persisted, "they're willing to get killed and to make no fuss about it, just because they're told to! Do you know why I believe there will never be an army of women? It's because women wouldn't sacrifice like that—just because there had been a plan made, a campaign planned, or whatever you call it! They won't sacrifice for anything except what they call love. And to sacrifice for love isn't sacrificing at all. That's just doing something for one's own gratification."

"What do you know about it, Leila Curtis?" Jock teased her.

"I know enough!" she retorted belligerently. "You're so silly! Any one would think that the only way any one ever came to know anything was by experience. You can learn things by reading—and by thinking and watching. Am I not right, Angie?"

Angie had been quiet during the foolish, futile discussion. She was sitting in a deep porch chair in a corner of the piazza. The light from the sitting room behind her fell upon her and brought out the whiteness and prettiness of her. The other girls and boys were in shadow, vague shapes of light and darkness.

"Oh, I don't know," she answered. "Everything depends on the personal equation. I think it would be perfectly easy for some women to make great sacrifices for very impersonal ends, and I think it would be very difficult to persuade some men to make sacrifices for any ends whatever. Of course, as

you've implied, Leila, tradition has a lot to do with it. It would take more courage than the average man possesses to defy the masculine code of honor and bravery. You know, I really think that poor nephew of Mr. Wright's whom he so loathes was actually more courageous in resisting the draft than half the boys who demanded a chance to 'can the kaiser' or whatever they called it. But maybe he wasn't. Maybe he was a coward—gun-shy. I don't know him. I only know that it would probably require tremendous bravery on a man's part to refuse to be brave like the mass with whom he was associated. Men in groups have to be brave. Men by themselves, I dare say, are as often frightened by the sound of the mouse in the wainscoting as women are. And women—"

"Women in the mass," said young Jock Maddison daringly, "have got to keep up the pretense of sweet feminine virtues, just as men have to keep up the pretense of bold, devil-may-care courage. But it's all bunk—both sides are bunk. Men are just as big cowards as women. Women probably are just as big rakes at heart as men. But in mass formation—there you have it differently."

"Now this nonsense that a man has always got to protect a woman's reputation even at the expense of his own," pursued Leila, ignoring Jock's contribution to the conversation. "I call that a simply rotten code! No honest woman would want such protection."

"Just the same, a man's a cad who—" began Jock heatedly, when a car glided to a standstill before the stone coping.

"It's Geraldine, coming after me, I think," announced Angie Howard. "She said she'd call for me."

"But we haven't had any dancing yet!"

"It's been too hot."

"Let's get out another car and all

go down to the river and have a moonlight swim."

"There isn't any moon."

There was a confusion of voices and suggestions as Geraldine came undulating up the walk from the street. Jimmy, so newly come to all this life of easy merrymaking, of idle conversational give and take, felt his heart pounding as she advanced.

He had not seen her since his début into Riverton society at Mrs. Wright's dinner, three or four weeks before. But he had been acutely conscious of her every day since then—conscious of the low voice with which she had mocked at their fellow guests as they had sat side by side at table, and with which she had interspersed little scraps of endearment for him; conscious of her hand against his when they had stooped together to pick up the fan she had dropped; conscious of her slipped foot seeking his beneath the flowing damask. He had been conscious, too, of tragedy in her eyes, just before the women had left the room. She had looked at him, when the attention of all the party had been for a moment centered upon a speaker at the other end of the table, and there had come over him a sense of her utter longing.

"Some day, Jimmy," she had said, swift and soft and sweet, "I'm going to ask you to listen to me. I want to talk to you. I want to tell you things. You'll have to hear me, no matter how you hate me or despise me. You'll have to. You will do it, won't you?"

And he had answered miserably:

"Of course, Gerry."

"I'll let you know when," she had whispered. And then she had floated out of the room with the rest of the women, and he had submitted, in a fever of impatience, to have several middle-aged gentlemen tell him exactly how they would have managed various campaigns if they had been in charge of operations overseas.

By and by a servant had delivered a low-toned message to Mr. Howard, and that gloomy-looking gentleman had bidden his host good night and departed. When finally the men had got into the drawing-room, the Howards had gone and with them his friend Angie. He felt particularly bereft by Angie's absence. Such a comfortable, friendly girl, with no aristocratic nonsense!

And then he had waited for the message from Geraldine that was somehow to change the world for him. He clung passionately to that hope, that belief. She had been his first love, his only love, and for all the precipitancy of their fall into passion, she had for him the enshrined purity of first love. He wanted, unconsciously, but very intensely to have some talisman that would keep that episode for him, despite her disloyalty to it. He wanted to be able to still forever the viperous doubt that came to keep him awake by night—the doubt of her innocence at the time when she had first let him kiss her in the spring woods.

There were girls, he knew now—he had heard much talk in camps since he had left Riverton—there were girls who were avid for experience; there were girls daring and cunning in contriving their own ends. Good Lord! He had heard, in camp talk, in talk among men on leave in the European cities, that there were women who took the greatness and the awfulness of physical love as lightly, as casually, as inconsequentially as some young men first took it. He wanted to know Geraldine none of these. He wanted, with an intensity that was sharper than even the desire for her had been during all those months when he had been fighting down the aroused fever of youth for her sake, to believe that there was in her no precocious Messalina. He was ready to live upon any explanation that would let him keep his belief in the purity of their experience.

But no summons from her had come to him. And then, one day, meeting Angie Howard in a book shop, he had learned that Mr. and Mrs. Howard were away on a motor trip. To-night was the first night he had heard of her since.

"When did you get back Gerry?" asked Leila Curtis, when the little babel of greeting was over.

"This morning," said Geraldine.

"Did you have a good time?" asked Jock Maddison politely.

"No. I hate motoring—long trips," said Gerry baldly. Then, "What were you all talking about? I could hear all your voices going at once the minute I turned into Emery Place."

"We were talking," said Leila eagerly, "about that silly old convention that a man has always got to shield a woman. I mean about her—what d'ye call 'ems?—her indiscretions. You know—that he must never kiss and tell. Don't you think that a rotten old convention, Geraldine?"

"I can't say I do," drawled Geraldine comfortably. "Why on earth should a man want to 'kiss and tell'—unless he's some sort of a low little bounder?"

"Oh, I don't mean that a man should run around boasting about the girls that have—that have let him hold hands, and all that. I don't mean that. Of course I think only a carrion crow would want to do that."

"Choice vocabulary you've acquired here and there about the world, Leila," commented Jock.

"But I mean this business of 'perjuring himself like a gentleman,' and all that. Now do you truly think a woman ought to expect perjury from a man?" Leila paid no attention to Jock.

"What's perjury between friends?" said Geraldine tolerantly. "I'm afraid my feminism isn't the same all-wool-and-a-yard-wide variety as yours, Leila, my lamb. I take it that you are demanding a single standard, of sorts,

But the single-standardness must begin with the other end. Let the penalty for feminine indiscretions be made as negligible as for masculine, and I'd be perfectly willing to see the woman pay it. But not when it is what it is. That is why, angel child, you must be very careful to play only with gentlemen when you arrive at the age for playing with fire."

"Oh, piffle!" said Leila, hating to be reminded of her youth.

"Did you hear from Uncle Judd tonight?" asked Angie Howard of her aunt-in-law.

"Yes. He isn't coming back until next week. My husband," she added to the company, "went on to Washington, leaving me at Boston this morning. Angie and I are two lone, lorn widows up on our hill, and we hope you'll all bear it in mind and do what you can to cheer us up."

"Well, how about a picnic party now?" said Jock.

The other youngsters took up the cry, a second car rolled out of the Curtis garage, eight or ten girls and boys piled into the two machines, and the expedition started for Riverton woods. Jimmy Farley had the seat beside Geraldine, who was driving. He felt upon the edge of new miracles. Somehow he was to be made happy. The very sight of her profile, clean-cut against the night, filled him with joy. The grim gray husband grew a vague figure upon the farthest confines of his consciousness.

They stopped at one or two stores on Main Street and acquired eatables and drinkables. Then they went on through the pleasant summer night, across the tracks, out through the humble neighborhood of the mill hands, and on into the country. Near Picnic Rock they stopped the cars, and the men carried the provisions down to the river's edge and built a fire on a flat

stone. There was singing that gained melody from the darkness and the wash of the little wavelets and from youth and summer and idleness. Jimmy, busied about the tasks assigned to him, was lapped in a strange sort of dream happiness, to feel her so near him. Once, when they were alone together for a second, she caught at his hand and held it in a fierce grip.

"There!" she cried breathlessly. "Do you know how I feel now?"

"I know how I feel," he answered her unsteadily.

"Can you come to the old place to-morrow?"

He shook his head.

"You see, I'm not a boy who plays hookey now. I—I can't get away from the office."

"To-morrow evening, then? No—that won't do. Thursday, then. I'll get rid of Angie. Thursday evening, near Big Rock?"

"Yes," he whispered.

It was not because the chops were underdone and the baked potato charred—though these things were so—that he could not eat the food served so triumphantly by the amateur cooks. It was because he was living ahead two days. He told himself that they were to meet in order that she might have a chance to clear herself to him. But in his turbulent heart he knew that he lied. They were to meet in order that they might taste again the joy of secret kisses. That was suddenly the whole of his desire now, and he knew that it was hers.

CHAPTER IV.

She was a brown nymph when he found her in the early evening on Thursday. She had paddled up the river, she said, from the little cove at the foot of her husband's great acres. There were far too many people on the river, she complained; she would like to close it to all the world. She wished



The mists cleared away. Jimmy looked down. There was the same beautiful white face that had looked up at him in Riverton wood.

she were Empress of Riverton, and she would do it!

"How do you like my dress?" she interrupted herself in her whimsical arrogances, to ask him.

"Very much."

"I've never worn it before. I shall never wear it again. It's going to hang in my wardrobe forever—the brown dress I wore the day when I told Jimmy Farley the shameful truth about myself—my penitential garment!"

"Don't say things like that. You haven't any very shameful truth to tell

me, I guess, Gerry. I—it was all my fault, all that happened, and—"

"Jimmy!" she interrupted. "Come here."

Jimmy crossed the few yards that divided them and sat down beside her.

"Jimmy," she pleaded, "don't you want to kiss me? Don't you want to put your arms about me? Then why—then why—"

With a sobbing breath she crept into his arms and raised her face for his kiss. She closed her eyes to it, and he saw tears upon her lashes. He

kissed them passionately away. And then, the sweetness of her stealing along his veins like wine, like fire, like perfume, he cried out sharply:

"Oh, Gerry, Gerry! Why did you do it?"

After a little while she withdrew from his arms and sat straight beside him. Through the green brush they could see the sparkle of the river below. She fixed her eyes on it when she began to speak.

"You see, Jimmy, I had made up my mind to marry—to marry money—before that time we met. I wanted it so. I hated living with Aunt Agatha. You have no idea what a bore Aunt Agatha is! What a deadly bore, with her old-maid ideas and her old-Emery ideas! There wasn't any sort of luxury I didn't want, didn't fairly *pant* for. I wanted lovely Chinese brocades to wrap me up in; I wanted furs from Siberia under my chin; I wanted jewels for my hair and my bosom. I wanted a maid. I loved the very feeling of having my hair brushed, on the rare occasions when I could afford to go to a hairdresser's! I wanted motors and travel and conservatories full of strange scarlet flowers, and I wanted to go to bullfights in Spain and to see the midnight sun— Oh, everything, everything! Life! Full life, not a starved, make-believe life, like Aunt Agatha's, with dreams of heaven instead of the glorious sights of earth, prayers and the altar guild instead of love and lovers!"

She paused, staring down the river-bank.

"But I wanted something else, too. I wanted—what we had, you and I. Love, possession! Not the horrible possession of the man who would buy me my luxuries, but just such love as we had. I knew I should have to marry an old man, a man whom I shouldn't love. There weren't any rich young men in Riverton, and Aunt

Agatha was adamant against going anywhere else. And—do you know, I believe that the thing one *wills* to happen happens? I willed you, Jimmy! Of course I didn't know that it was going to be you, but it was. And I had called you to me—you, so straight and so clear-eyed, with such color in your thick hair and such a laugh! You haven't laughed since you came back from France, Jimmy! I willed you.

"You came—and loving you was so sweet, my dear, my dearest, that for a little while I almost thought I couldn't go on with the rest of my program. I was half deceiving myself as well as you when we talked about a new career for you, something acceptable to Aunt Agatha. But I wasn't quite deceiving myself. I knew that I meant to marry a rich man. I had had my beautiful, white little love, dear, that didn't ask anything, didn't demand anything—that just was. And I was going to have the rest, too. I thought I could go through with the program I had planned.

"I don't believe I could quite have done it, Jimmy, if you had stayed. Not so soon, anyway. I couldn't have made so clean a job of it. Oh, it would have been horrid! We couldn't have met comfortably, and there would have been jealousies and reproaches. 'Where were you Sunday when I waited an hour?' and, 'Who was the girl you were walking with on Main Street Wednesday evening?' It would have been like that. Horrid! And by and by I should have gone on with the rest of my little program after a scene, recriminations, boredom. But we've never had a quarrel, have we, Jimmy?"

She turned her lovely, liquid eyes toward him, and he shook his head, mutely.

"The war came, and the whole thing resolved itself so simply for me. Sometimes I have—delusions of grandeur, I think the alienists call them. I

think the whole world is run for me, to further my plans. It seemed to me as if we went into the war so that—Don't look at me like that, Jimmy. Of course I don't *really* mean what I'm saying. But the war came, and you went, and I longed for you, and I was glad, glad, glad of what I had done! No one can ever take that away from us, Jimmy. And then I made up my mind to marry Angie Howard's Uncle Judd. He was indecently rich, and he was a bachelor. I thought that that argued him rather bloodless—the sort of man who wouldn't be too demanding with his wife. So I married him. And he is rather bloodless. But—Jimmy, it's hell! He's—exacting—about everything—my time, my occupations, my reading, my thoughts—everything. And about his rights as a husband. He's cold and jealous. Goodness! The girls he didn't marry when he was a young man were lucky! And I've got everything I thought I wanted most—cloth of gold and peach brocades and emeralds and perfumed baths and maids to give them to me, and I hate it all! Jimmy! Jimmy!"

The sparkle left the waves below the bank. A pale primrose reflection of the late sunset shone upon the water. They watched it, blissfully miserable. By and by the primrose died, and a faint shimmer of silver came from a slowly rising moon.

"You're coming back with me. You're going to paddle me back to the canoe," announced Geraldine.

"Had I better?" asked Jimmy doubtfully.

"You've got to. Haven't I told you that my tyrant is away for nearly a week? Nearly a week, Jimmy! Think what can be done with a week! Think how you and I lived a whole eternity of happiness in a week! Let us take this week. Don't look so horrified, my dearest! Don't let your eyes remind me of my marriage vows if I choose to

forget them! Marriage vows—ugh! But, anyway, you're coming back with me. It's too faint, the light on the river, to let the people in the other boats distinguish who we are. It's perfectly safe. You're to come in to supper with me. Angie is there to play propriety.

"Sometimes I wonder if Angie isn't with me for the fell purpose of playing propriety! No, I dare say not. I don't believe she'd bother with the job, though she's devoted to her Uncle Judd. He sort of brought her up, you know. Not very successfully, for he wanted her to be an ornament to society, and she wanted to be a working woman, and she won out. Weird preference, but it was hers! Went to college and learned all about the law of supply and demand, and that sort of thing, and then—how angry Judd was! —took a job as investigator for the immigration bureau or the department of labor or one of those dreary things, and went all over the country talking to foreigners in the construction camps of railroads and power companies. Most unwomanly, as Judd says.

"He approved her canteening, though. He has a soft spot in his heart for her, and he always wants her at home when she takes a rest. He told me, too, that he was going to leave her his collection of cameos. He's very proud of it. I believe it is very unusual. He thought I was generous because I was so enthusiastic about letting her have it, whereas I loathe cameos, no matter how rare. Hideous chunks of stone, don't you think? And when there are such lovely, colored, shining jewels in the world! Come along, now."

She led him down to the canoe and arranged herself among the cushions while he took the paddle. They glided swiftly, silently, up the river. There were summer-night parties out upon the water, and the sound of song and laughter was in the silvery air.

Jimmy was happy and troubled. He was with her; he had kissed her again, had felt the yielding of her soft body in his arms, had heard the things she said, so fanciful, so outrageous, so alluring to him. But he was not altogether love's fool, and he was fairly well assured that it would be a highly undesirable thing for a young man in Riverton, with his way to carve in the world, to make love to Mrs. Judd Howard. Besides, he didn't want to make love to another man's wife! He was hanged if he did! A sort of cleansing rage burned in him at the thought when he expressed it thus commonplacely.

Another man's wife? Ah, but this was Geraldine, his Geraldine, his dream, his sweetheart!

He gave her a hand up the steps of the neat little boathouse at the edge of the estate. The moon was high and bright now.

"You're coming in to supper, you know," she reminded him. "To bread and cheese and—"

"Hello, Gerry!" said a pleasant voice from the landing. "I was growing worried about you and was thinking of taking a boat out to look for you. I was picturing you like poor Ophelia or Elaine, tangled up with water lilies. Good evening, Mr. Farley."

There were no kisses served with the supper, which was an extremely apothecarized form of bread and cheese. And greatly as Jimmy desired Geraldine's kisses, he felt a sense of relief in the restraining presence of Angie Howard.

CHAPTER V.

"You know, Geraldine, of course it's none of my business," began Angie Howard on the third morning after Mr. James Patrick Farley had first supped with them, "but—"

"Please, don't, Angie darling!" interrupted Geraldine, who was having her

breakfast in her boudoir, stretched out on a chaise longue of black lacquer and cane and biscuit-colored cushions, while a little tray loaded with silver stood on the black lacquer table by her side. "When a woman begins by saying that of course it is none of her business, I always know I'm in for a raking over the coals."

"I'm not going to rake you over the coals." Angie was fresh and blooming in denim and a garden hat. She had been working in the strawberry bed, she had announced on entering her aunt-in-law's room, since six o'clock. There was a shortage in the gardener's staff at Howard Hill which was eminently satisfactory to the energetic young woman. "But—you've been out on the river with that nice Farley boy every evening since you got back, and you've had him here to supper twice—and Uncle Judd—"

"Are you keeping a record for Uncle Judd?" asked Geraldine insolently. But her insolence was not angry. She was popping into her mouth one of the big, luscious berries which Angie had brought in from her labors.

"You know I'm not," replied Angie, unruffled. "But—these things become known. You call him 'Jimmy,'" she added irrelevantly.

"Boy in my home town—why shouldn't I? I've known him for ages."

"Known him? Why—why, Geraldine!"

Geraldine bit her lips. She was sorry she had made that slip. It had been stupid of her. She recalled now that she had given no sign of recognition when Angie had presented Jimmy to her at Mrs. Wright's dinner. She laughed.

"That was a fib, Angie," she confessed. "I didn't know him. But of course I might have known him. I almost knew him. His grandfather was

a sort of retainer of my grandfather's, and I dare say I did see him as a little bit of a tike hanging around the stables —when the Emerys had stables. I ought to have known him, but I admit that I didn't."

She looked at her guest with an air of charming, penitent frankness, very disarming, very winning. But Angie felt and showed discomfort. She had heard so many boys "over there" tell little fibs, manufacture little tales, in order to win their own way or to cover up their misdemeanors, that it sometimes seemed to her that she had been endowed with another sense—one that divined the truth from the falsehood in spoken words. It was going to be a most uncomfortable gift to lug about with her through life, she thought ruefully.

"Well, Geraldine," she said uncomfortably, "I don't want to be meddlesome, and I'm sure I don't want to be prying. But—but—to tell you the truth, I'm afraid the nice boy is falling in love with you. I think that worries me as much as that my uncle might be—irritated."

Gerry laughed two laughs—one noisy, expressive of scorn of the idea, one inward, full of mockery for conscientious old Angie. Falling in love with her indeed!

"You're romantic, Angie," she said. "Jimmy Farley is probably engaged to some nice little Irish girl in the mills, or, if he has begun to aspire now that Mr. Wright has taken him up, with one of the stenographers—"

"If he is, my dear," said Angie sharply, "you're more reprehensible than ever! You're taking chances with another woman's happiness. But what is the good of talking in that snobbish way? You're showing him very particular marks of favor yourself, and there's nothing about him that would make him undesirable for the best-born girl in Riverton."

"You seem rather keen on him yourself," said Geraldine nastily.

"I like him very much," answered Angie, refusing to lose her temper. "But I don't like him enough to squabble about him. And the real reason why I brought the subject up was because of something in yesterday evening's paper. I didn't mean to tell you—it's so low—but now—Wait a minute and I'll find it." She dived into the capacious pocket of her gardening skirt and drew out a scrap of paper, torn roughly from its page and brown now with earth. "This is it—from that 'Around-About-Town' column that the *News and Courier* is beginning to run—gossip and innuendo, mainly. A cheap, provincial imitation of some of the scandalous big city weeklies. Here it is: 'The river is very popular these warm days—and more especially these warm nights. There are very few evenings when there is not a flotilla of small pleasure craft out upon the moonlit waves. The amusement parks along the shore are well patronized, and some of the leafy nooks are even better patronized. Not only hoi polloi of our thriving city amuse themselves with paddling and flirtation, but some of our highest aristocracy, also. We think we passed one of our most splendid young society matrons the other evening paddling in company with one of our best-advertised war heroes.'" Angie paused and looked anxiously toward Geraldine.

Across that young woman's beautiful, pale face a wave of crimson wrath ran, almost like the welt of a whip.

"The beastly little scavenger!" she cried. "I know who wrote that! Paul Ramsey! I knew him when I was a girl at Miss Cox's. He was at the military academy in Southport then. They fired him for cribbing in exams or picking pockets or something high class like that! He tried to renew his acquaintance with me last winter, when Colonel



Jimmy, lithe as a cat evaded the blow. Some one was dragging Colonel Bretherton away.

Bretherton first took him on his filthy old rag of a sheet. He's getting even with me for refusing to remember him."

There was a curious coarseness in Geraldine's intonation—an ugly, rasping quality to the voice that usually flowed like honey. Angie looked at her half bewildered, puzzled.

"Well," she said finally, "you see now why I think you should be careful. Uncle Judd—he worships you so. You wouldn't want to hurt him."

"My dear"—Geraldine's face was normally colorless again, and she dipped a strawberry into powdered sugar with an air of competence and satisfaction—"I certainly don't want to hurt my husband, and neither have I any intention of hurting myself. It would hurt me awfully to have him angry—justifiably angry—with me. And I don't mean to provide that little beast, Paul Ramsey, with easy copy for his libelous column."

"I'm glad, Gerry. You're sensible, I

know. And you'll forgive my butting in, won't you? I felt especially called upon to do it because I'm going to leave you to your own devices for a day and a half. I shan't be here to play propriety for you to-night. I'm going up to Boston to see Flora MacPherson. She's sailing to-morrow for reconstruction work."

"I'll be a good girl while you're gone," Geraldine promised.

Perhaps she meant to be. But life was running at high tide in her veins just then. And when again would her husband be away, and she in Riverton? He showed such a pertinacious taste for his own home, with his own collections and all his fads! And when he traveled, he liked to have her with him in order that he might have an audience for his monologues—so Gerry interpreted it. And there was Jimmy, ardent, battling against his ardor—her slave, her admirer. He would not be that in another year. Time's changes were so inevitable. The joy of last year is such dust and ashes upon the palate of this. She frowned and sighed. That contemptible little bounder, Paul Ramsey!

Then she smiled. One last time! With the good old watchdog, Angie Howard, doing her noble duty by a noble friend in Boston!

She reached for the befrilled telephone on the stand. She called up the office of the Wright Foundry. She smiled as she waited her answer.

CHAPTER VI.

Never had Geraldine gowned herself with such care as for the tryst she meant to keep that night. She dismissed her maid early in the evening. She had declared herself without appetite at dinner, so that her request that there should be a light supper laid out for her in her boudoir late in the evening would not seem strange. She had

had the greenhouses and the rose gardens despoiled, that the place in which she abode might be a veritable bower of softness and perfume. She had experimented with the lights until she had achieved just the effect of rose and moonlight that she desired. She showed herself a true artist in the delicate art of allure.

There was a balcony opening from her boudoir. It was a wide affair, with room for lounging chairs and a table. There were boxes of mignonette and heliotrope at the edge. Awnings screened it from the heat of the sun by day, and at night they provided a screen against impudent eyes. Geraldine was very glad of one of her husband's vagaries that night, one that had hitherto appealed to her as a mere bit of crankiness. He had the servants' wing of the establishment separated from the masters' rooms. The hirelings really lived in a separate building, connected only by a covered passage with the dwelling itself. He was of a haughty, aloof disposition, and it was not so much snobbishness as an intense sense of family intimacy which had induced him to make this division. The servants were aliens—he didn't want alien personalities under his roof. Well, she was glad of it to-night.

Jimmy had tried not to come. He had kept himself occupied all the early part of the evening. He had said, again and again:

"I'll do nothing of the sort. She's mad—mad. It isn't safe, with that houseful of servants, and with that nice Angie—" Oh, yes, she had said that Miss Howard was away! But even so

—Ah, Gerry!

Perhaps he knew throughout all the hours when he was mentally defying her command, when he was planning the first act that would free him from the dear, delicious, dangerous bonds that were weaving about him, the first disobedience to her whim—perhaps he

knew all the time that he was going to yield. The struggle, the feeling of weakness, the desire to be weak, the desire to be strong, the yearning to be with her, the knowledge of the futility of their being together—all these emotions produced in him an irritation very unlike his usual good temper.

It expressed itself, publicly and unpleasantly, at the Business Men's Club, when he and Colonel Bretherton had a conspicuous quarrel over nothing more important than the possession of a certain chair by the window. Ordinarily Jimmy, in possession of the chair while he pretended to read the Boston paper, and in reality saw only the words, "To-night, at ten, I'll let you in myself," ordinarily Jimmy would have resigned the chair and the paper to any claimant without two thoughts about it. But he was in a state of quivering nerves, and when Colonel Bretherton, after hovering over him for a second, moved away to another chair by another window, with a loud remark about "Mannerless gutterlings," Jimmy felt called upon to rise and cross to the other window and say:

"Meaning me, sir?"

"Meaning you!" retorted the colonel, standing by his guns. "I'll repeat the words if you like—'mannerless gutterling.'"

"Your own manners make you a judge, sir," said Jimmy.

In another minute or two, there was a quarrel of real proportions in progress. Something was said about France. The colonel rose and struck out at Jimmy. Jimmy, lithe as a cat, evaded the blow.

"Of course you know you're too old a man for me to strike," he said. "But there are other ways—"

Some one was dragging him away. Some one else was dragging Colonel Bretherton away. There was talk of the heat, of a touch of sun—

The quarrel was stayed for the time.

10

After he had lunched, Jimmy was aware that it was that contest within himself about Geraldine that had been the real cause of it. He was almost tempted to seek Colonel Bretherton and apologize for what? He hadn't called the colonel names! The insult had been hurled at him. He hadn't even retorted with a military slur.

The day wore on, hot, relaxing. He wanted to see her—he was going to see her. He would keep his head in her presence. He would refuse all that she, in her lavishness and her fervor, might offer him—nay, had promised him. He would go and see her, merely—as any man might.

CHAPTER VII.

Something made Angie take the eight-sixteen out of Boston that evening instead of staying until the next day. She told herself that it was because it was so hot, and the city seemed so noisy. She wanted to be where it was cool and where there would be the fresh scent of watered lawns and of blossoming parterres.

"Besides," she said to herself, more honestly, "I want to be able to tell Uncle Judd that I was at home every single night if—if—anything comes of that nasty little paragraph. Some one might send it to him. The Ramsey person himself might send it to him—probably will, if he has some cause to dislike Geraldine. It's better for me to be at home."

So, urged on by the feeling, she took the night train. She brooded upon Geraldine as she rode. So beautiful, so wilful, so utterly a materialist, a sensualist, so experienced in spite of her youth. Angie reviewed the list of famous courtesans with whom history had happened to supply her the names—king's mistresses, empresses of arrogant promiscuity in their love affairs.

She wished that her new aunt-in-law did not remind her of such ladies—her new aunt-in-law, a nice, young modern American girl brought up by the most devout and refined of females! It was preposterous, what she was thinking!

She walked up from the station in Riverton. There was no taxi waiting, and, anyway, she wanted to stretch her legs after the cramped ride in the old day coach with its antiquated, musty velvet seats.

The big house, a quarter of a mile back from the street on its hill, seemed asleep in the night. The cool scent of green things, of watered grass, of flowers, stole refreshingly upon her nostrils. A load of worry dropped from her. She trod the grassy edge of the path for the pleasure of feeling the spring of turf beneath her feet. There were no lights in any windows. It didn't matter. She had had her own latchkey—greatly to Uncle Judd's annoyance at first—ever since she had come home from college.

She climbed the shallow flight of steps to the piazza and the front door. From around the corner of the house a laugh, silvery, delightful, floated down to her—Geraldine's. She stood stock-still—a laugh from Geraldine's balcony at this hour! Ah, perhaps her uncle had unexpectedly returned. Then another laugh sounded. It was not her uncle's. It was—unmistakably—the nice boy's. Nice! Oh, sickening, sickening!

She crept in and stole through the dishonored house to her room. She closed the windows, very silently. Tomorrow she would go away—she would go back to France—she would go where there was merely war and cruelty and destruction, not this slimy treachery.

She thought of her uncle. She thought of Jimmy Farley as she had seen him on the train. She cried bitterly, smothered, into her pillow.

The next morning she did not appear until midday. Let Geraldine think, if she would, that she had just come back from Boston. Some day she would tell her the truth, would threaten her with exposure unless—Bah, what would a promise mean to Geraldine, who could violate her oaths? Sickening—sickening!

She appeared in the dining room with hat and gloves on as if she had just arrived. An excited-looking maid waited upon her, but showed no interest in the time of her arrival. She had more thrilling things to think about that day than the comings and goings of her employers.

"Miss Howard, did you hear anything about it as you came along?" she cried. "Jameson was downtown at the repair shop, and he says it's out on a bulletin board in front of the *News* office—and everybody is talking about it. Colonel Bretherton was shot last night, and they've arrested Lieutenant Jimmy Farley. Oh, Miss Howard, do you think he did it?"

TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER.





WHAT THE STARS SAY

by Madame Renée Lonquille

Would you know yourself—your character, your disposition, your traits, your lucky days? Would you know some of the things that are likely to happen to you in the future? If so, you will be interested in following each month Madame Lonquille's articles on Astrology.

VIRGO

BETWEEN August 22nd and September 21st of any year, the Sun passes through the constellation or group of stars called Virgo. This is the sign of the Virgin, the sixth sign of the Zodiac, an earthy, mutable sign. The planet Mercury is its ruler, and reaches its greatest power while passing through this constellation. People born at this period usually have well-proportioned figures, of slender build. Their complexion is generally very good, their hair brown, and their eyes between a blue and a brown. These natives are pleasant in conversation, much given to study, fond of learning, but fickle and bashful as a virgin, of which Virgo is the sign.

On first acquaintance, these natives often give wrong impressions of themselves. One usually fails to appreciate the keen intellect and discriminating cleverness hidden under a quiet appearance of apathy or perhaps even ignorance. It can be said of these people that they learn through hard experiences. They are capable then of converting their knowledge into an intelligent philosophy which is readily understood and of great help to people in general. However much they may seem to hide their abilities, they are

never in the least unaware of them, and usually govern friends and relatives in a subtle way, especially if the latter are weaker characters.

They are critical, practical, very discriminating, and self-possessed. It can be truthfully said of Virgo natives that, although they do criticize and dominate others, they are not at all forgetful of their own shortcomings, and control themselves impartially. They never clamor for fame and position, but work quietly, making few pretensions.

The high types of Virgo people are naturally very pure minded and chaste, but seem to be thrown into more temptations than those of most other signs. They are extremely sensitive to all vibrations around them and also to the least changes in atmosphere, which would be unnoticed by others. By nature they are rather cold, until their confidence is gained, after which they make helpful, faithful friends. They are not easily understood, often seeming too retiring and modest at first, until their trust is assured, when they are very good company and excessive talkers. They have a strong will of their own, but it can be suddenly changed if really logical reasons are shown.

These people are not fighters. Their anger is rarely aroused, and only by good cause. But they are likewise slow to forgive, and as they learn most lessons of life by experience, they will argue that "a leopard never changes his spots" and will for a long time distrust a person who has hurt them. They live by the rule of wishing to know the cause and effect of everything. They are not content to accept what pleases, but must know the whys and wherefores, which is the reason they are able to store up useful knowledge. In an argument, they are always sure of their ground, and since they are likely to know the matter in question from its foundation, their opinions are invariably convincing.

Virgo people as a rule do not give the impression of being great workers, but if we could look into their minds, we would be more than surprised to find that they are unusually active. There is no other sign that appreciates more the psychic side of life. Many Virgo people are given to the study of occultism, as a result of their anxiety to know the causes of all effects. They are not much in sympathy with religious ceremonies, but fully appreciate the underlying reasons and for just what the demonstrations stand.

Trivial matters, of which others would not take the least notice, often please or upset Virgo natures, but this is caused by their clear knowledge and foresight of the importance of detail, and their appreciation of the fact that "a straw shows which way the wind blows."

Virgo people often overlook personal attentions or kindly little services others may bestow, but if you wish to win the everlasting friendship of these natives, pay due respect to their intellects and they will never forget it. This is a special trait of these people. They also crave personal liberty. Generally they get their own way in every-

thing which they think is the "only way," but, strange to say, they wish others to enjoy the same privilege and are very tolerant of all peculiarities and notions other people may have. Regardless of time, also, belongs to this sign.

The undeveloped types of Virgo are selfish, hard, and materialistic. They often put to bad use their natural ability to govern weaker natures. They strive to make a show and to give the appearance of being more prosperous than they really are. The men of this type are brags and often worthless, using their discriminating cleverness to gain whatever they desire without a thought of giving anything in return. The women aspire to be leaders in style and dress, and are extremely critical, domineering, and often untruthful.

DECANATES.

To get a little nearer the individual character, this sign, like all others, is divided into three decanates or periods of about ten days. Each division subdues or emphasizes the general characteristics of the sign. Persons born on any one of the last ten days of August come under the first decanate. They are very quiet and slow, and give a great deal of thought to any question before acting. They are very sensitive, even bashful, when they are praised, but fully appreciate their good points, as well as their defects, and strive for perfection in detail. Persons born in this decanate are supposed to live longer than those in the other divisions.

The second division is from September 1st to the 10th. Those born at this period are the most favored, being the purest types of Virgo. They are very thorough in anything they undertake and usually gain a high position in life by their persistent, sober attention to duty and their wonderful ability of being alive to the main chance

and never letting an opportunity pass. They are extremely good judges in almost all situations of life, and are scientific, sensitive, and patient.

The last division is from the 10th of September to the 20th. These people are not so well favored. They are more reserved than those born in any other part of the sign, and are not easily understood. They are less likely to succeed, and prefer a quiet life to either fame or fortune. The faculty of turning their talents into money is denied the natives of this decanate, but, on the other hand, they are often possessed with a passion for gambling, and, with Jupiter favorable, may be very lucky.

HEALTH AND DISEASE.

The sign Virgo rules the bowels and solar plexus. It produces a more keenly sensitive organism than any of the other signs. Thus the natives often suffer from colic or indigestion, while their constitution is comparatively strong and the sign Virgo is against disease, but these natives, with their analytical, self-conscious natures, often imagine that they have almost any ailment that happens to be prevalent. Their nervous system does not escape entirely, and worry will upset them very quickly and show on the digestive system. They are extremely sensitive to unhealthy or unhappy vibrations around them. Eczema seems to be a source of trouble to many natives of this sign. Because of their extremely fine organism, these Virgo people are very susceptible to drugs, strong drinks, and high seasonings, which they absorb into their systems very quickly. Yet they respond better than most others to the simple, natural home remedies. As chemistry and the study of hygiene come as second nature to these natives, they rarely suffer greatly from ill health. They realize the value of diet, and if surrounding magnetic con-

ditions are happy, the Virgo subjects ought to enjoy good health.

EMPLOYMENT.

The occupations most congenial to the Virgo temperament are those that require discrimination, industry, and persistence. These qualifications lead them to success in many walks of life. They favor employment that is not too active. Literary or artistic pursuits are especially congenial to this type of people. They succeed in business, but are not very lucky in speculation. They are very fond of gardening or farming, in which they are successful, being able to make almost anything grow profusely. Their wonderful minds are capable of putting theory into useful practice, unlike the ordinary brain, which is full of theory, but has not the ability to carry out the details of work. The people of Virgo are not content to dream unless an opportunity is given to materialize their theories as well. All sciences that are difficult to understand seem simple to the Virgo type of mind. They will seldom be among the unemployed, for their rare abilities and keen intellects give them a chance to make their living in many ways. Virgo is the sign of the philosopher.

CHILDREN.

If children are born well in the sign Virgo, they show very early decided tendencies to dominate, especially other children. They are quick, bright, intellectual pupils, but are inclined to spoil any new subject they may begin by being too intense. They suffer often with nervousness and fear of the dark, but this can be overcome by appealing to their reason and understanding. They possess great ability in the study of sciences or deep problems. It is their delight at school to explain and decipher difficult problems. Although they often seem timid and bashful, they always do and say the right thing.

at the right time in a cool, matter-of-fact way.

These children invariably love flowers, and should be encouraged in the healthful pastime of making gardens, for they get a great deal of benefit from digging in the ground. If let alone, these little ones will show surprising skill in growing vegetables and flowers. They often show decided talents in art or literature, and never are impatient of details or starting from the foundation. Scoldings never discourage the Virgo temperament, for they seem to respond with a persistent effort and ardor that cannot be disturbed. In fact, it has been said that Virgo children do their best work when they are angry.

FRIENDS, LOVE, AND MARRIAGE.

Although Virgo subjects do not easily make friends, they are very loyal and true to the few they have won. Their complete understanding and tolerance of the weaknesses of others gains them a few ardent friends. Virgo people as a rule are inclined to interfere with their friends' affairs, which may lead them into trouble. But if they are told anything in secret, they can be relied upon to keep it forever. Their word is their bond. They are very agreeable company, though at times they can seem cold and harsh. With those in their immediate family, they are affectionate and demonstrative. Being great lovers of personal liberty, they often grow restless and tired of marriage. Much depends on the partner's disposition, for the Virgo native demands chastity and loyalty besides liberty and respect. They will, however, find their best friends and mates among those who have the sun in Capricorn, born between December 20th and January 21st of any year. They will agree well with those born in Aries, March 21st to April 20th, or in Leo, July 21st to August 22nd, or in Sagittarius, November 22nd to December 20th. However,

if the Moon, on the horoscope of birth, is found to be in Virgo, Taurus, or Capricorn, these natives with the Sun in Virgo have a good chance of happiness with such a partner.

NOTED PEOPLE.

A few of the noted people born while the Sun was passing through the sign Virgo are Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, Queen Elizabeth of England, Mr. Asquith, Maeterlinck, Tolstoi, W. W. Jacobs, Bret Harte, and Marshall P. Wilder. The best-known character in all imaginative literature, Hamlet, the prince of Denmark, affords a wonderfully wrought exposition of the Virgo mind and character.

The most fortunate day of the week is Friday. Any change, journey, or starting a new business should be undertaken on this day.

The astral color is green. Jasper is the precious stone that should be worn.

PREDICTIONS.

Although this sign foretells prosperity due to the subject's untiring efforts along some line of art, literature, or religious study, the position or money is in great danger of being lost by the natives' actions in some sudden manner. Relatives will not be of much help, and little sympathy is shown by them for the natives. They may lose an elder brother or sister, which will make a great change in their lives. In traveling on the ocean or in foreign countries, they will meet many very agreeable acquaintances and make friends, but they will be forgotten in the many changes that are sure to occur in the Virgo natives. Their lives are full of woe; many sudden and violent happenings can be predicted; delay and disappointment in love affairs, lawsuits, and divorce are almost sure to occur. They will probably marry twice or form an attachment while they are legally bound. Their second union will cause

a stir in their lives, perhaps for good or quite the reverse. These people may have enemies in the art world or among speculators. They may make a permanent enemy through some love affair. Children are a source of care and trouble; they will not marry readily. Few inheritances will come their way, and those that do, bring lawsuits and quarreling.

Travels may be predicted, either to a foreign country for employment or in connection with lands or short journeys on business. Change of residence is more frequent with these natives than with others. They will gain through investigation of the psychic realm, in which they are very clever. They rise in life by depending on themselves. The first half of life is not fortunate. In childhood, there is serious danger of accidents and sicknesses, but the last half foretells position and even wealth acquired by hard, persistent labor. They may gain by will through the marriage partner. Fortune favors them more away from their home, and it can be predicted that they will succeed as teachers, artists, or in some science or branch of literature, also as bankers or business men.

After a life of many obstacles, sudden disasters, and changes in fortune, the Virgo subject invariably comes out on top and will learn a lesson and profit from every experience, good or bad.

Mrs. E. P., Born September 8, 1889, 8 a. m.: You were born with Jupiter in Sagittarius rising in good aspect to Saturn. This position will tend to smooth out life's rough places for you, and will help very much to overcome the obstacles made by the Sun in Virgo. You probably are very good-natured, benevolent, tactful, and honorable, and have a good chance to do much in the world and advance far beyond your sphere at birth. You are of rather a curious and anxious disposition, although very inoffensive and retiring. You are very apt to lose many opportunities, and often show less good judgment than one with the Sun in Virgo should. You will probably be married

more than once, first to a man denoted by Mercury, then to one described by Venus, probably of an artistic temperament. A good sum of money will come to you, probably through a near relative. Around your thirty-first year, the Sun and Moon come into opposition, and you may expect something very much out of the ordinary run of your affairs, probably the birth of a child.

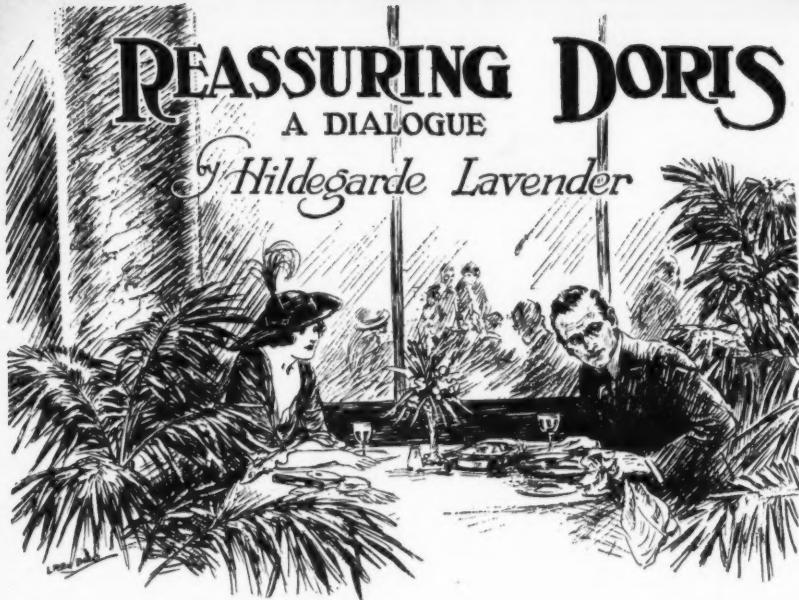
Miss I. M. S., Born September 14, 1884, St. John's, N. B.: The Sun in Virgo and the Moon in Cancer cause a negative combination and too much attention given to personal matters. You are very changeable and often moody. You must guard yourself against sensation or sentimentalism. Your house of marriage is very complicated. It contains the Sun afflicted by Saturn from the house of love affairs, which brings delay, irregularity, and separation. Grave fatalities are indicated on account of a very unfortunate marriage. You may marry a man from a distance, possibly a foreigner. There may also be some secret connected with your husband or some near relative. The last half of your life will be decidedly the better. I think one of the greatest changes of your life will occur in your thirty-fifth year, the last of 1919 or first of 1920, but it is good for you in the way of money from your husband or to your husband.

N. E. M. W., Born September 9, 1900, Manitoba, Canada: The sign of Leo was rising at the time of your birth. The Sun and Mercury were in conjunction in the house of money. This is a somewhat contradictory map, but certain positions seem to indicate strongly that you are a very psychic, intuitive person; you delight in quiet surroundings, but at times you are restless and overanxious. You will encounter many obstacles and hindrances in your life, either from poor health or lack of ready money. At a certain period, you will experience a sudden financial success, perhaps through real estate, lands, and houses. Saturn is in your house of love affairs, and augurs delay, disappointment, and separation in more than one love affair. There may also be more than one marriage, but all the signs are against children. Mars' position warns you of secret enemies, loss, and slander, and you probably lose your mother at an early age. This year of 1919, everything seems smooth and easy for you, nothing much happening. But next year, when you are in your twentieth year, there are changes going on around you, and, on a very pleasant short journey, you may meet a man of importance in your life.

REASSURING DORIS

A DIALOGUE

Hildegarde Lavender



SCENE: A discreet corner in Jacques' Restaurant, more or less screened from observation by tubs of palms, pillars of imitation marble thick enough to support the Alhambra, waiters hurrying with trays held aloft, bus boys, men and women bearing hopefully down upon the few empty tables, only to discover them "reserved," and then haranguing the head waiter upon the injustice of the universe, as represented by Jacques'. There is a row of mirrors set into one wall.

Time: One-thirty of a winter afternoon.

Dramatis personæ: Mrs. Wentworth, thirty-three and charming, and John Esterbrook, thirty-six and charmed.

ESTERBROOK: Do you realize how much this means to me, Doris?

MRS. WENTWORTH: But you told me that it didn't mean anything at all. Else, of course, I should never have

come. It mustn't mean anything to you!

ESTERBROOK: It doesn't mean anything that it ought not to mean—that is perfectly true. But it means a great deal, notwithstanding. It's the first time I've had you to myself for an hour. Do you realize that?

MRS. WENTWORTH: Ah! I wonder if I ought to have come. I don't want you to think that I am—well, that it's customary for me to come to town to lunch with other men than my husband.

ESTERBROOK: If it were customary, I suppose I shouldn't value it as I do. But I understand you. You mean that you aren't that cheapest of all women, a married flirt. If you were, my dear Doris, we shouldn't be here. I don't wish to set up for a ridiculous male prude, but there are more important things to be done at noon of a working day than to play the trite old game with

a woman you don't care for or respect. And a man never really cares for or respects a married flirt. No. That is what makes this meeting of ours so wonderful. You're having lunch with me exactly as another man might—

MRS. WENTWORTH: Mushrooms *sous cloche* and all! How well you men must do yourselves!

ESTERBROOK: Oh, well, perhaps it would have been a chop and baked potato, if it had been another man. But that's a detail. The essential thing is that we're lunching together in no sentimental, no clandestine, fashion, but as two honest friends. I'm not likely to misunderstand you, Doris. And when I began by saying how much this meeting meant to me, I had just that in mind—that you were a woman who could admit a man to a wonderful friendship, devoid of—er—the materials for regret. Don't you like that squab? Here, try this; it's better done. That's the wonderful thing—that the times have changed, that we don't live in the stone age, that men aren't troglodytes—not all of them, anyway—and that women have progressed beyond the Evelina stage of sex intercourse, when every man who picked up a woman's handkerchief had designs upon her virtue. This is a wonderful lunch.

MRS. WENTWORTH: It is indeed.

ESTERBROOK: Eh? Oh, yes! I see. You mean the food. Jacques does do one very well. But what I meant, as of course you know, is that our lunching together is a wonderful thing because it means so much and so little. It doesn't mean that we are playing at love, deceiving our husband and wife, and all that. It means that the world, and the men and women in it, have entered upon a new plane of relationship—frank, friendly, self-respecting. Do you mind my telling you that that's a very jolly little hat you're wearing?

MRS. WENTWORTH: I'm glad you like it. It's the first time I've worn it.

ESTERBROOK: That blue under the brim—I suppose you bought it because that brought out the sapphire in your eyes so brilliantly?

MRS. WENTWORTH: Ah, Lucile has told you that women dress to their eyes.

ESTERBROOK: No, I give you my word she never has told me anything about it. But it's clever of women—if they have eyes like yours. Only no other woman has.

MRS. WENTWORTH: You'll make me sorry I came if you flatter me.

ESTERBROOK: I can't flatter your eyes. But I'll stop talking about them if I embarrass you. Wasn't it magnanimous of me to put you with your back to the wall so that you can see the whole room and all the other men in it, while I look only at you?

MRS. WENTWORTH: At me, and the reflection in the mirror!

ESTERBROOK: On my word, I haven't looked into the mirror once. Only into the pair of blue mirrors—But there—I promised not to talk about them. It's true, you know, what I want to say. But because it's the kind of thing a man might say who had persuaded you here to make love to you, I can't go on with it.

MRS. WENTWORTH: No, you mustn't. Or I shall believe you weren't in earnest in all that you said about—oh, about it's being so right and ordinary and all that—our lunching together.

ESTERBROOK: It's enormously right—and I hope it's going to be one of the most ordinary occurrences in existence.

MRS. WENTWORTH: Do you think Lucile would like that? And Bob?

ESTERBROOK: Why not? They're enlightened human beings. They know us, and how devoted we are to them. I give them credit for common sense and some knowledge of the age they live in. I want you to get it out of your head, Doris, that there is the slightest sentimentality in this situation. We

aren't keeping a tryst. We aren't embarking on an *affaire*. We're having lunch together—two good friends. Why shouldn't we be doing it? We don't forswear, we men, the society of all other men than our brothers, or you women that of all other women than your sisters, just because we happen to love our brothers and our sisters. Why, then, must men and women forswear the society of all others than their wives and their husbands just because they love them? Bob is a wonder—but he isn't everything that there is in masculine temperament, talent, and interests. You have a right to some other talk—some other man talk—besides his. He has the right to some other woman talk besides yours. It's perfectly right, natural, normal—

(He breaks off and stares into the mirror in the wall behind Mrs. WENTWORTH. His face grows darkly red. On the edge of the table, his hand involuntarily knots itself into a fist. Mrs. WENTWORTH stares at him in astonishment.)

MRS. WENTWORTH: John! What on earth is the matter? *(She leans forward and cranes her head so as to see beyond him.)* I don't see what you are looking at. *(Turns and tries to see the reflection that has disturbed him.)* Oh! It's Lucile! Lucile and—

ESTERBROOK: Yes. Lucile and Harry Gunther. Gunther!

MRS. WENTWORTH (*stiffly and looking at him in haughty inquiry*): Yes?

ESTERBROOK: Er—yes. Lucile and—er—Harry.

MRS. WENTWORTH: You seem disturbed? Don't you like Harry Gunther?

ESTERBROOK: I—oh, I don't know! See here, Doris—I don't want you to think—

MRS. WENTWORTH: But I am thinking! I'm thinking that you show a great deal of excitement over the perfectly right, natural, normal sight of your wife lunching with another man!

ESTERBROOK: But, hang it—she's my wife! What I mean to say is—what I mean to say is—is—that I didn't know she was lunching in town to-day. I thought she said— Oh, what I mean to say is this—that Lucile isn't modern enough to be doing this sort of thing innocently—I mean matter-of-course, as you and I are doing it. She—of course, I'm sure it's innocent—but she's having an adventure. That's it. She's having an adventure. And Gunther! Gunther isn't like me, you know. He's not a business man. He's an artist. He's temperamental. She deliberately courts the risk of being talked about. I won't have it! It's quite a different thing, and I don't like it! I confess I don't like it!

MRS. WENTWORTH: Reassure yourself! The head waiter is ushering Mrs. Gunther over to their table—very much out of breath and late as usual! And meantime—thank you for a little exposition even more—er—enlightening than your discourse upon changed times and changed manners. It's only for other men's wives that the changed times are really changed, and only in other men's wives that the changed manners are really pretty! Good-by. I'm going to telephone Bob. And—thank you so much for a delightful lunch!

ESTERBROOK (*to a retreating figure*): Doris!



The Beauty Ravages of Summer

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

HEAT, arid winds, and pitiless mid-summer sun rays, either singly or collectively, have no respect for delicate beauty that requires coddling. Therefore the fall usually finds women the worse in "looks," albeit they may have gained immensely in health. And, by the way, it is usually the woman of strength and vigor who "does" outdoor activities without a thought as to the effect upon her skin and hair, and who shows the ravages of nature's ruthlessness to so marked and unpleasing an extent upon the change of the seasons.

Persons living continually in hot climates are characterized by those very conditions which we of the more temperate regions so much deplore in ourselves—oily skins, dusky complexions, and excessive hairiness. These usually go hand in hand, and may even be considered beauty features in some parts of the world. With us, the pendulum swings to the other extreme. We resort to all manner of artifices to reduce the skin to a dead whiteness and to wear as little hair as is consistent with the present-day modes of extreme simplification in this respect, while oiliness of the face, even a suspicion of "shine," is rigidly taboo.

On taking an inventory of one's beauty deficits in the fall, it is frequently found that the hair has been tremendously stimulated during the heated term. An embarrassing growth in unusual situations is by no means rare—and is not always confined to the gentler sex. When this growth is on the scalp, however, it becomes a disturbing element to girls and women, who by the conventions are forced to wear their hair long. It becomes necessary, in many instances, to thin the hair out, and to cut a foot or two off its length, in order to dress it becomingly or to manage it hygienically. When, in addition to this, the hairiness descends upon the forehead and brows, or grows down the neck, in front of the ears, it constitutes a decidedly annoying element. Extreme cases are now and then seen or heard of. Some were formerly exhibited in museums as "bearded women" or "dog-faced men." Shoemaker tells of a Burman who was covered from head to foot with hair eight inches long upon the cheeks, ears, and nose, and from four to five inches upon the shoulders. The daughter and the grandchild of this man had the same peculiarity.

Just as other features may crop out

in various members of a family or descend from father to daughter and from mother to son, so does this also occur in hair, and of course constitutes a far more embarrassing condition in girls and women than in boys and men. Now that beards are no longer fashionable, men have become as sensitive as women at the exhibition of hair upon the face, when this is not strictly confined to the upper lip or the chin. A growth of hair is often excited upon an otherwise fine, smooth skin by the use of cosmetics—to prevent sunburn and the like.

Any blemish on the skin, such as a mole, is stimulated by the same factors that awaken the dormant hair follicles into activity; which in turn may act as an irritant upon the underlying hair follicles, and cause a disfiguring number of long hairs to appear upon the surface of the mole. Pulling these out forcibly may result in a more pronounced growth. The only remedy here is electrolysis.

No woman of mature years who values her appearance will permit the existence of so disfiguring a blemish as a mole. Regarded as a mere beauty spot in a young girl, it often develops into a serious skin affection in later years.

Bushy eyebrows and unusual hairiness between and above the brows are disfiguring to any face, man's or woman's. Men frequently have their barbers weed out the hairs in this situation at regular intervals. It is a good and simple method, although productive of a heavier growth.

Why should summer's heat give rise to an excessive growth of hair, and why one season and not another? The hair is an appendage of the skin and usually shares in its fortunes. Fine hair, often scant, accompanies a finely textured skin; heavy hair, sometimes coarse, is usually, not always, attended by the same character of skin, in which

the oil glands are readily activated by external stimuli. The hair follicles are deeply embedded in these. What stimulates one stimulates another. At birth the entire body is covered with a fine down which is shed after a few days. In the majority of cases, the follicles are weak and disappear also, but many must remain to cause the sudden growth of hair under conditions that are favorable to this growth. While the hair is an appendage of the skin, both are intimately related to the nervous system. In summer there is usually a general relaxation of this system; the bars are let down, as it were, the inhibitory forces of the body are not so vigilant, with the result that a wild growth of hair may occur in favorable soil. The hair has been likened to a plant, and the skin may well be compared to a garden. In summer, an uncared for garden is covered with weeds overnight. The simile is obvious.

As suggested above, the only remedy for excessive hairiness upon the scalp is to trim it out. This is a hygienic, as well as a beauty, need, because heavy hair requires a goodly blood supply and may draw the blood from other parts of the body where its need is greater. Again, it conduces to headache and other ills. Oiliness of the scalp leads to dandruff and other eczematous conditions. For this, extreme cleanliness is imperative. Frequent washings are said to favor oiliness in some cases. The hair should not be brushed, either, more than is absolutely necessary to dress it. Drying powders are often helpful, as they allay the oil. A simple formula consists of equal parts of finely powdered orris root and white cornmeal, which is sifted through the hair, allowed to remain for some length of time or overnight, and thoroughly brushed out in the morning. Dry shampoos are those not used in water, but rubbed into the scalp and hair roots

with a soft cloth. The following is a very good one: potassium carbonate, one dram; ammoniated water, two drams; bay rum, five ounces; tincture of cantharides, one and one-quarter drams; alcohol, five ounces; water, five ounces. Dissolve the potassium carbonate in the water and add the other ingredients.

Why do some persons tan and others not? Why do the sun's rays *burn* some skins and tan others? Every one knows that blondes burn more quickly than brunettes, who as a rule tan and do not burn. Every now and then a person with light hair and blue eyes, usually called blonde, expresses amazement that a coat of tan has been experienced from exposure to the sun, while others of similar complexion were severely burned. On closer investigation, however, it will be noticed that this particular "blonde" is in reality not blond, that the skin, instead of being a pinkish white, is an ivory white; and so the entire matter is plain—those possessing skins rich in coloring matter tan, while those whose skin contains little pigment *burn*.

Increased deposition of pigment upon the surface of the body is nature's "hurry-up" call to protect the skin from the scorching effect of intense heat rays. The sebaceous glands are furthermore stimulated to throw out a covering of oil, and we imitate nature by using creams and by protecting the body with veils, shade hats, and parasols, or by donning clothing that does not absorb heat.

Those who spend much time in surfing, or otherwise expose themselves to direct sun rays, have learned from experience the value of coating the skin with lanolin or cocoa butter, yet many girls and women deliberately invite a heavy coat of tan because, for the time being, it renders them more attractive. In the summer "setting"—outdoors, light clothing, and so on—this

is true. Later on in the season, however, a dusky-hued skin becomes a great annoyance, especially when it is found highly unbecoming by contrast with the colors one is accustomed to wear in town. Exposure to superheated air and wind renders the skin coarse, heavy, and red in some cases, particularly the neck, chest, and shoulders, which are protected with heavier clothing during the greater part of the year.

These blemishes never entirely fade out; the skin never again resumes its virgin fairness. Therefore, women possessing an exquisite skin should not be condemned as vain and silly when solicitude for so rare a gem takes precedence over that form of enjoyment which abandons itself to heedless and continuous exposure to nature's elements and which, to so many, constitutes having a "good time."

Freckles are akin to tan. In young women and girls, freckles are regarded indulgently, and are even considered an attraction upon an otherwise plain face. This is due to the fact that those who freckle rarely have a good color; they are either pale or sallow, and the light sprinkling of tiny dark spots saves the complexion, as it were, from being entirely drab or colorless. So called "liver spots" are not freckles. Liver spots are always rendered much darker than they would otherwise be by exposure to sun and wind. Most of the remedies recommended for tan are also useful for the eradication of summer freckles, but liver spots are more deep-seated; in fact, they are constitutional blemishes, and require a combination treatment—an eliminative and a local escharotic, that is, an intestinal tonic, to sweep the system clean and purify the blood, and a local agent to bleach and peel the skin deeply. These remedies cannot be published, but will be furnished on private application.

For deep-seated coatings of tan and for summer freckles, a rather heroic

treatment consists in applying about a teaspoonful of the following solution, on absorbent cotton, to the affected areas: corrosive sublimate, one gram; zinc sulphate, lead acetate, of each, two grams; alcohol, fifty grams; distilled water, three hundred grams. Zinc-oxide ointment should be kept in contact with the parts during the night.

More detailed treatment on tan, freckles, and skin discolorations generally will be furnished readers upon compliance with the invariable rule of this department.

The skin is a vast excretory organ, as has often been stated. The amount of effete matter eliminated from the system through the pores surpasses belief. In warm weather, the sweat and oil glands are usually overactive, especially those upon the face. Consequently there occurs an accumulation of sebaceous matter at their outlets—the pores. This sebaceous matter attracts dust and grime, and so gives rise to blackheads. Now the pores are furthermore chronically distended from many causes—relaxation of the skin, for instance, being a frequent cause in warm weather; also the overuse of powder, foolishly indulged in by many under the belief that powder absorbs moisture and so cools the skin. Chronic distention of the pores may occur, then, from within, as a result of overactive sebaceous glands or relaxation of the skin, and from without by the overuse of powder and so forth. On removal of blackheads, furthermore, the pores usually remain open, unless astringents are immediately employed.

Careless removal of blackheads, whether by means of the finger nails or of a special little instrument that comes expressly for this purpose, or of an old-fashioned watch key, almost always bruises the skin, thus producing other and more noticeable blemishes. It is a better plan to cleanse the skin, and so

free the pores from these accumulations, with quite hot water that has been softened with boric acid and *meals* in place of soap. Meals are not only very cleansing, but act much like a fine toothbrush, penetrating more deeply into the tissues than plain soap. Meals are bleaching and also refine the skin by contracting the pores.

Any finely powdered meal is useful for this purpose, oatmeal with powdered orris root and shavings of castile soap being a delightful preparation. When the sebaceous matter in the pores is solidified, stronger measures to clear the skin are needed. After the above softening process, this is usually accomplished by means of a Comedo extractor. Gently bear down upon the "blackhead," which is thereby readily expressed. It may be necessary to dissolve the secretions. If so, after bathing as above, rub the parts thoroughly with: ether, one ounce; alcohol, six drams; aromatic spirits of ammonia, two drams. Decomposition of accumulated sebaceous matter gives rise to pimples and "sores."

Never squeeze a pimple. Soften the skin, then open the pimple with a sterilized needle, expel the contents, and daub on peroxide of hydrogen. Finally rub in the following ointment: resorcin, one-half ounce; zinc oxide, one ounce; starch, one ounce; petrolatum, two ounces.

In pimples, blackheads, or any kind of skin trouble, the first consideration must be the intestines, gentle stimulation of which by means of laxative treatment is imperative to a cure.

Now simple oiliness of the skin is quite common, and can readily be overcome by using the prepared meal mentioned above, applying astringent lotions, toilet vinegars, and the like afterward. A delightful *cosmetic water* for use on a blotched or slightly erupted skin contains: sublimated sulphur, forty-five grains; glycerin, one ounce;

spirit of camphor, three drams; spirit of lavender, three drams; cologne water, one ounce; distilled water, twelve ounces. This cosmetic water, without the sulphur, makes a very desirable application for continuous use, as a beautifying agent.

The opposite of the foregoing conditions—that is, dryness of the hair and scalp, a dry, scaly, even wrinkled condition of the face, neck, and hands, in fact, of those portions of the body that were exposed to the atmosphere during the summer's heat—is by no means uncommon at this season of the year. Dryness of the scalp leads to a persistent form of dandruff and of falling hair. Here nourishment of the dried-out hair follicles and of the scalp generally is called for. Daily applications of stimulating oils by means of deep-seated massage with vibrant finger tips, and a hair tonic containing quinine, penetrating oils, and so on, if persistently used, will bring about happy results in a short time. Further data on these measures are available to readers.

The treatment of a dry skin should be carefully selected to suit individual needs. As a rule, soap is not well borne in these cases; cleansing meals and creams are better. Of chief concern, however, is the awakening of inactive oil and sweat glands. Here massage and electrical treatment are demanded. Massage cannot be performed by every one, even by professionals. In many instances, "the cure is worse than the disease." A safe plan for those who cannot afford high-priced experts is the slapping movement. After the skin has been thoroughly cleaned, a pad of absorbent cotton is saturated with an ice-cold lotion and repeatedly slapped upon the parts until the skin cries out under the smart. The action is very tonic to the glands, the circulation, and the nerves, while the surface of the skin is slowly rejuvenated. One of the best lo-

tions for this purpose is *cucumber milk*. The formula for this takes up considerable space, but will be sent to those who wish it.

Dryness of the skin may extend to other parts of the body, notably the feet, and so great may this be that the entire sole of the foot may be covered with a callous growth, while corns project from numerous toes.

It is a matter of frequent comment that the skin upon the feet thickens with remarkable rapidity during the heated term. This is often caused by the *pressure of shoes* upon swollen feet. It is too bad that we cannot wear sandals and other models of comfortable footwear to conform to our seasons. A paste to relieve dry, reddened, painful feet contains: salicylic acid, five grains; zinc oxide, one dram; starch, two drams; petrolatum, one ounce. Smear on soft linen, bandage to feet, and wear during sleep.

Callosities over large areas are best treated by removal, *when dry*, with a pedicure knife, the surface then being covered with a plaster consisting of salicylic acid and soap. This can be procured at any chemist shop. Surgeon's adhesive plaster is also good. The plasters must be renewed and worn continually until the condition is remedied. The following is an excellent corn cure: resorcin, salicylic acid, of each, fifteen grains; lactic acid, liquid collodion, of each, two and one-half drams.

Sufferers from dry, burning feet should be very careful of their footwear. As a rule, such feet are bony, and have comparatively little padding in the way of fat and muscle. Continental attrition of the bony surfaces, first upon one another, then upon the footwear, may lead to more serious conditions than those mentioned above. Daily massage of the feet with bland oils, the use of seamless hose and cushioned shoes, are worth trying.

WHAT READERS ASK

YOURS ANXIOUSLY.—There is no quick and safe way to reduce the bust. Measures that act in this manner destroy the glands—therefore *never* use camphor on the breasts, unless you are indifferent to the destruction of a feature that is distinctively feminine. The following treatment is given:

FOR BUST REDUCTION.

Aristol 2 grains
White vaseline 20 grains
Essence of peppermint 10 drops

Mix: Rub this ointment into the breasts gently but thoroughly; after that cover them with lint or cotton saturated with this solution:

Alum 2 grams
Acetate of lead 30 grams
Distilled water 400 grams
Label "Poison."

Over the saturated dressing place a layer of oiled silk, and bandage the dressing down with tolerable firmness. This treatment must be pursued each night for months before results are gained.

Wearing a rubber brassiere constantly will reduce the busts by creating heat and inducing a flow of perspiration. Upon removal of the brassiere the breasts should be bathed in a solution of alcohol and water, or alum and water.

MAYME X.—Here is an excellent preparation for thin eyebrows and lashes: cologne, two and a half ounces; glycerine, one and a half ounces; fluid extract of jaborandi, two ounces. You can have one-fourth this amount made up. Apply carefully to the edges of the eyelids with a fine camel's-hair brush, so that none of the liquid enters the eye. If you prefer a paste, send to me for further directions.

HECTOR V.—Reddened eyelids and scanty lashes are frequently caused by eye strain. Profit by what has been given above to "Mayme X," and send to me for formula of cooling, healing eye wash. Rest your eyes as much as possible. Last—but by no means least—consult an eye specialist.

R. S. V. P.—I cannot imagine a condition of the skin such as you disclose. You should have remembered the behavior of the famous prisoner at Libbey, who, under far more trying circumstances, contrived to wash his body every day in a tin cup of water!

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.

Let me suggest that you anoint the skin with oil. Fresh, sweet lard will answer nicely. After fifteen minutes, rub off with an old, soft towel, and get into a full, warm bath containing one pound of washing soda and one-half pound castile soap. While immersed in the water, scrub the skin gently with bath mitts for from ten to fifteen minutes. You will be delighted with the result. After the bath, spray the body with a good toilet vinegar. I will gladly send a formula for this, as well as for methods of softening the bath, for cleansing meals, and for other means of beautifying the skin of the body. You cannot keep your skin sweet and clean if you wear soiled underclothes. They should be changed every day. It is an easy matter to wash a simple undergarment and pair of hose every night, thus insuring a fresh suit for the next day.

SADIE J.—Use the following salve directly on the pimples: lanoline, two and a half ounces; almond oil, two and a half ounces; precipitated sulphur, two and a half ounces. As the quantity of each ingredient is the same, you can have a small amount made up, say two drams of each. Now, this salve is only palliative—it will not cure your tendency to break out in pimples just when you want to look your best. What is required is a healthier gastro-intestinal tract, diet, rules of health, baths, and special local treatment. All this you can have by writing to me for it.

HERZOG.—You could not have addressed me care of this magazine, as I should surely have received your letter. However, "it is never too late to mend," so I will give you here a powder for an excessively oily skin: oleate of zinc, two drams; powdered arrowroot, half an ounce. Dust over the parts with a ball of absorbent cotton. The oil glands are sometimes stimulated unpleasantly by the kind of soap used; therefore, you should employ cleansing meals, spraying the face afterward with a cooling lotion. Too much shaving has the same effect as irritating soaps. You must consider all these things, and eliminate the cause; then treat the condition.

HANNAH T.—This is the best time of the year in which to make bleaching cosmetics. Formulas for the same will be mailed to you on proper application.

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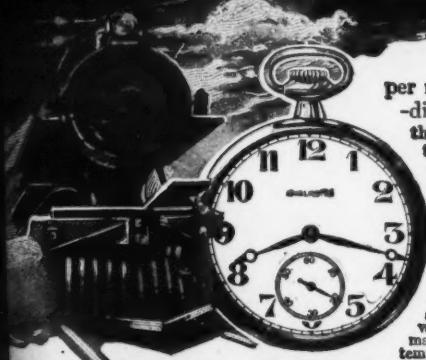
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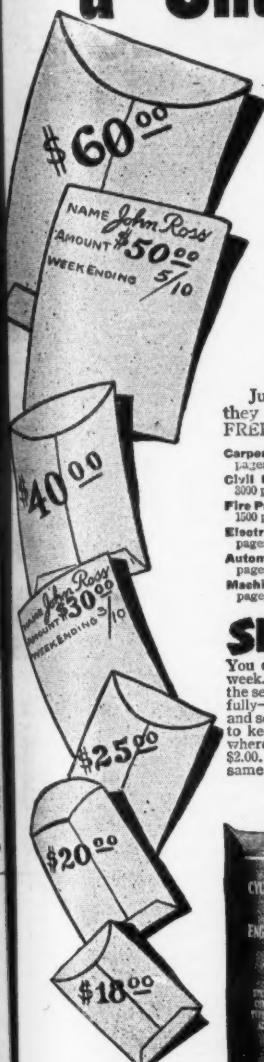
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Sir: Send at once—fully prepaid and absolutely free—complete particulars of your great offer for this month.

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"Why I Chose a Brunswick"

By BURTON WYNNE

Adventures in Seeking the Super-Phonograph

FOR years my family has wanted a phonograph. Yet we hesitated. We were on the verge of buying often, but delayed.

We love music. And we value the phonograph for the wealth of world-wide talent it brings to the home.



overcoming all the current handicaps and setting new standards.

We never liked the idea of a phonograph which would play only its own make of records. No one catalog contained all our favorites. Each line of records offered its attractions.

Another thing we quarreled with was tone. We were repelled at the strident tones of some. And others seemed to be nearly perfect, but not quite.

I realize that all this sounds like we were too critical and that we set ourselves above the thousands who were content with the phonographs we hesitated to buy.

But we wanted to be sure before we bought, so as to avoid regrets.

In our determination to find the super-phonograph, we came upon the new Brunswick. It was announced as something different, something advanced.



We read and heard of the Brunswick Method of Reproduction, which included the Ultona and an improved amplifier.

And so we investigated. We were somewhat skeptical—but we came away as proud owners.

For here, at last, was our ideal instrument—one which played all records at their best, one with incomparable tone.

This remarkable instrument ended our search. We found in the Brunswick Method of Reproduction all we had looked for and more.

The Ultona is a simple, convenient, all-record player, adjustable to any type of record at a turn of the hand. And now we buy our records according to artists rather than make. Thus we overcome the old-time limitations.

I am convinced that the tone of The Brunswick is far superior, and due chiefly to the strict observance of acoustic laws.

The tone amplifier is built entirely of wood, molded so as to give the sound waves full opportunity to develop. No metal is used in this amplifier, so there are no stunted, metallic sounds.

My advice to every music lover is to hear The Brunswick before deciding. One's ear immediately appreciates the difference. And old conceptions of the phonograph are changed.

Brunswick dealers everywhere are delighted to play the new Brunswick for you and to explain its betterments.

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General Offices: CHICAGO and NEW YORK

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LIFE SAVERS

THE CANDY MINT WITH THE HOLE

Genuine Life Savers have only purest flavorings. They sell so fast they do not lose their delightful flavor and freshness. Far more Life Savers are sold than all imitations combined.

Life Savers are made with such care that they cost the dealer more than any

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To be *sure* of uniform goodness, purity and freshness, insist on The Candy Mint with the Hole. Nickel a pack everywhere.

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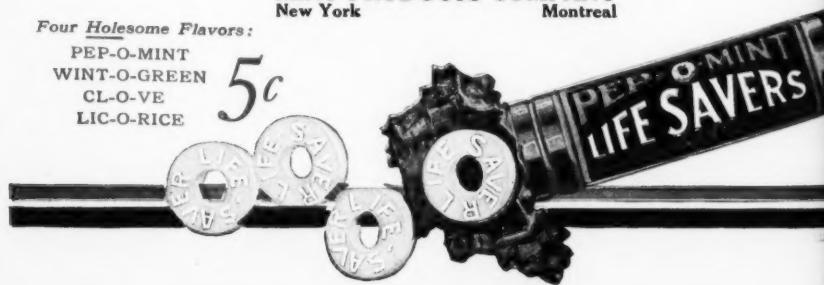
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